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ON THE COVER: The upcoming Regan MacNeil action figure, by NECA!

THIS ISSUE: What's the scariest movie ever made? Over the past three years the editorial staff of HorrorHound have been asking their favorite genre stars and directors - and 85% of them all say the same thing. *The Exorcist*. So with the thirty-fifth anniversary in tow, we have decided to give due respect to the King of Horror (or is that Queen?). Writer, Paul Davis, delivers one of the most in-depth retrospectives on the franchise put on paper, decorated with all the goodies HorrorHound could uncover, posters, lobby cards, books and toys!

Halloween has come and gone, but we have a few articles on tap to help allow the haunting season to live on. First off, this past fall's Monster-Mania convention (in Cherry Hill, NJ) hosted the first-ever Mask-a-Palooza. A mask-industry event which hosted hundreds of creations from today's top sculpting and mask making talents, including many featured in this very magazine over the past thirteen issues (such as Don Post Jr., and Justin Mabry). Speaking of Mr. Mabry, we have opted to feature this popular mask maker in this issue's Artist Spotlight! Featuring tons of images and his first one-on-one interview with the artist behind Night Owl Productions!

For those fans of the '80s VHS phenomena or more importantly the mondo genre, this issue is packed with gold! Our Video Invasion series continues with a special look at Gorgon Video, the host of the uber-popular Faces of Death film series. Writer Matt Moore takes a look at the history of this company which helped spawn entire sections of real-life death vids at your local Mom 'n Pop video store! If that wasn't enough, Aaron Crowell takes a closer look at Faces of Death and its brethren with a special GoreHound feature on the history of Mondo Mania! Check it out on page 48!

The gore continues throughout this issue with a special article on the history of video game jiggernaut, Splatterhouse: a fun comparison piece on classic to modern horror icons, a company spotlight on Peril Unlimited - a studio devoted to the undead, an exclusive interview with writer/creator, J.D. Ferguson on the cult classic *Dark Night of the Scarecrow* and its impending DVD release, plus movie news (*Twilight*, *My Bloody Valentine*, 3D), toy news, and so much more!

November/December 2008

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My Bloody Valentine,
Twilight, TrueBlood,
Friday the 13th, etc.



VIDEO INVASION!
GORGON
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LETTERS

(Love the '90s... I ran just a clever name for a mildly entertaining TV program on VH1. Since we premiered our Video Invasion article series, by Matt Moore, we have seen an impressive increase in reader response. We have shown obvious dedication towards those zany films of the era most of this HorrorHound! crew grew up in, having produced amazing tributes to such films as *Ali-Arator*, *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2*, and *Monster Squad* but culting those beautiful box covers and showcasing the histories of the companies who brought home entertainment to that next level has been inspiring. Even our last two issues' top twenty lists have created a buzz that put a smile on the editor's face. I do love the '90s I love pop culture, I love VHS box art, slasher films, crazy memorabilia, Michael Jackson's Thriller, Friday the 13th, Splatterhouse, action figures, and movie-licensed comic books. It takes all kinds, and we have had a blast making this issue, and every installment prior. Keep sending us those letters to let us know what YOU love!

Nathan Hammen
Editor-in-Chief, HorrorHound

• LETTER OF THE MONTH •

Dearest HorrorHound,

I first picked up your magazine in August and I must say, it is perfect for horror aficionados like me. What attracted me to it was Edward J. Repke's artwork, the extensive history of the Halloween franchise, your article on Gallo, and, the purpose of this letter, your 20 underrated Slashers of the 1980s! I don't usually write critiques or "compliment letters" to publications, but after reading your #12 issue, I felt your staff knew what they were talking about, and from several horror lovers to another, you'd know where I was coming from. So, no hard feelings!

Although I was pleasantly surprised and overall ecstatic to see the likes of *Slaughter High* and *Just Before Dawn* on your list, I was at the same time disappointed to see non-slashers like *Don't Go in the House*, *Scars*, and *Crossed* take the place of other more worthy back list gems. While they are indeed amazing and groundbreaking (Don't Go in the House is one of my favorite horror movies of all time), slashers they are not. By including these on your list, you bring up the question, "Well, what is a slasher film, really? How does it differ from a regular horror film?" It therefore clarifies the definition and ideology of what makes a slasher film, and may confuse newcomers to the genre. A slasher film easily identifies with the killer or killers around them, which is why the movies mentioned don't work, we both see their faces and hear them talk. I realize you can't please everyone (especially if you're doing a "Top 20" list, you're bound to leave some out), but eliminating them and putting more formulaic films that copied the methods as done by Halloween, it would greatly benefit a slasher connoisseur. I was shocked to see *The House on Sorcerer Row*, *Curtains*, and, one of my all-time favorite films of the genre, *Ghosts of the Past*, absent from the list. These "body count films" rank up there with the likes of *The Bloody Valentine* and *The Burning*, and fit the genre better than a straight-forward horror like *Crossed*. I understand you were trying to broaden the envelope-pushers of the genre, but the harder you push it, the further it strays from the "slasher" mentality.

Yours truly,
Racer Dango, Auburn, Maine



Know Your HorrorHound! Sean Clark (writer)

What I write for HorrorHound: Creator of Horror's Hallowed Grounds

What I do outside of HorrorHound: Run my companies: Convention All Stars, Silver Shamrock Novelties, and HorrorShirts.com. Plus I write and produce films such as *The Black Waters of Echo's Pond*.

The first horror movie I ever watched: "Can't remember for sure, but *Jaws* was the first to really leave an impression on me."

My favorite collectible: "My screen-used *Pollux* Clown."

My favorite movie: "*A Clockwork Orange*."

Your craziest Horror's Hallowed Grounds experience? "Breaking into Denver's State Insane Asylum (from Season 5) in the dead of winter and climbing up to the fourth floor to get in."

Dear HorrorHound,

First off, I would like to say thank you all for your magazine that gives excellent in-depth coverage of all things that horror junkies like me want so impatiently for. I live in a small town in Oklahoma, so I don't have access to all the horror fests and conferences that a bigger city would provide. So I have had to get all my info from magazines, and now I can get the real coverage from your magazine. Just one more short comment and I'll leave y'all be. I love your coverage of the '80s movies. I was a small child in those days, so I missed a lot of it, but with your mag I can now find what I want to see. I believe if HorrorHound started the slasher revolution again, we the faithful fans would join the cause! Just imagine a Friday the 13th coming out once a year to the theaters, instead of all those Japanese-inspired, high-budget, low-score movies! Slasher fan, James Horton

I just got done reading about the top twenty videos you would like to see on DVD and I believe you forgot one. What about *Summer Camp Nightmare*? This movie scored the hell out of me when I was a kid and it deserves to be on DVD just as much as those titles if not more.

Richard Edington

Let's face it, *Four Flies on Grey Velvet* might get released on DVD, Blu-Ray, or whatever home theater system, after Doug French graduates from college. Since this is the most likely scenario, is it possible for your staff to screen it at some of your screening conventions? It would be a real treat for Argento fans who want to see this film the way it was meant to be seen, on a big screen with a packed house.

Adam Koesters

Please let me express how much I love your magazine! In a time when corporate bullsh*t rules the market, your publication stands as a testament to quality and honor. HorrorHound is the *Excelsior* of horror magazines!

Scott Gunders

I love your magazine. It's the only magazine that I subscribe to and the only one I've ever read cover to cover. I love seeing it evolve over the course of time with better and more in-depth articles. One new feature which I love are the top 20 lists, but one thing has bothered me with them. Missing from both of your lists (top 20 underrated '80s slashers in issue #12 and top 20 most wanted on DVD in issue #13) is the seminal Sasequatch slasher flick *Night of the Demon* from 1995. Not only is it one of the best Bigfoot movies around, but it's one of the best slashers too! Great kills from the best sleeping top death ever (even better than Friday the 13th Part VI) to a bare handed castration are brought to life with some pretty good music effects. This little-seen Video Nasty has never been released on DVD and is well deserving of some attention.

John Portanova, Seattle, WA

HORRORHOUND

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THE HORRORHOUND MAGAZINE
BY MARK DEAN

My BLOODY Valentine: 3D

by Eric Newell



The original *My Bloody Valentine* was released in 1981, when the Western film world was still entrenched in the so-called "slasher boom" created by John Carpenter's *Halloween* three years earlier. "Valentine" revolves around a sleepy Canadian mining town. On Valentine's Day, twenty years before to the start of the film, a group of miners left work early to attend a Valentine's Day dance. Shortly afterwards, a gas explosion trapped the five remaining workers. When the sole survivor was pulled from the wreckage six weeks later, it's revealed that he had sustained himself by eating the flesh of his co-workers, and that the forced cannibalism had driven him mad. A year later, he escaped from the mental institution he had been placed in, and cut out the hearts of the crew members who had left them behind the year prior. In the process, he left a warning that should the town ever celebrate Valentine's Day again, the same fate would befall the town's residents.

Flash forward to present day, and in true slasher fashion a group of young miners and their girlfriends decide not to heed the warning and throw a Valentine's Day party of their own. Predictably, residents start being offed left and right, a love triangle comes to light and accusations fly as to who is really doing the killing. The infamous finale of the film features the remaining protagonists being stalked in an underground mine-shaft by a killer wearing a miner suit and wielding a pick-axe. This image in itself is by far the most memorable aspect of the film, and has penetrated the lexicon of iconic horror imagery.

Despite the respect it gets from genre fans today, it has not always been a smooth road for *Valentine*. The film is infamous for having raised the ire of the American MPAA, who at the time was trying to reign in the raucous gore being brought to theater audiences by a new group of genre luminaries. After submitting the film nine times, director George Mihalko ended up having to cut nearly ten minutes of footage out of the finished film in order to avoid an X rating. The cut version was then released by Paramount (who also had a hand in the production) into US theaters. After a short theatrical run, it took in a little more than \$5 million. Considered a failure by the company, *Valentine* remained locked in Paramount's vault for years while they seemingly ignored the calls from many for both a sequel and an uncut release of the original. As recently as 2001, Mihalko submitted a treatment for a sequel to *My Bloody Valentine*, again getting the cold shoulder from Paramount.

With that in mind, it's easy to understand the confusion that surfaced last year when Lionsgate announced that it had acquired the remake rights from Paramount. Not only were they going to remake the film, but *Valentine* was to be shot in the new form of Digital 3D, with the filmmakers aiming for an R rating. It has been months since the announcement was made, and now with principal photography finished, a rough cut (including 3D) in the can, and only a few months left until release, we decided it was time to start getting some answers to all of our questions.

It was with all this in mind that we recently sat down with director Patrick Lussier to pick his brain about the project. Patrick cut his teeth in the horror genre in the '80s as an editor, and began his directing career eight years ago with *The Prophecy 3: The Descent*. His most well received film, surprisingly enough, is the 2007 direct-to-video sequel *White Noise 2: The Light Starring Nathan Fillion*. He also has extensive experience working with iconic slasher villains, having served as an editor on Wes Craven's *New Nightmare*, the entire *Scream* series, and

Halloween: H20.

There is often a knee-jerk reaction with horror fans when it comes to remakes, and Patrick is well aware of this. He assured us that he is a huge fan of the original. "Ya, back in the '80s I worked in a video store, so I had seen it for free," he laughingly told us. "And being originally from Canada, it was a tried and true Canadian content film... with the Moosehead beer and everything like that in it."

Patrick then went on to explain to us that it was an executive at Lionsgate that first sparked his passion for remaking *Valentine*. As he told us, "All the credit goes to Mike Pasosnek over at Lionsgate. Mike is a fantastic supporter of the genre. He was one of the executives working on [the original film] at a studio level. So it had been on his radar since it was made to eventually do a remake."

Once Lussier was on board, he began working with producer Jack Murray to put the other pieces of the puzzle together. There was already an existing script, but Patrick felt it needed more punch, so he hired horror friendly writer Todd Farmer to come in and whip it into shape. Farmer is a die-hard genre fan whose writing credits include *Jason X*, *The Messengers*, and the upcoming video game adaptation *Clock Tower*.

Lussier describes what Farmer brought to the project: "I read the first couple drafts of *Valentine*, and they had [some] really promising things in them," he said. "But it needed somebody with a lot more experience to really drive that home. Todd was the first that came to mind, as he really knew how to nail the small town dynamics that this story would have. The kind of 'Scream meets *Twin Peaks*' vibe that we were going for."

Scream meets *Twin Peaks*? I had to ask, did that feeling survive through the shooting process? "It's certainly an observation a lot of people have made when we've showed it to them," he explained. "People watch it expecting to see a really fun slasher movie and as it unfolds they realize not only are they getting that, but they're getting something else on top of it; a story with some very rich characters and some very dark undertones that were in both of those films."

Once the script was ready, casting began. For the male lead, Lussier cast Supernatural star Jensen Ackles. "Our casting agent suggested Jensen, and I immediately sent him the script," he told us. "He's got a great physical presence. He cuts such a heroic figure, yet he can play somebody who has walked a lot of rough roads, and that's what we needed." Joining Ackles in the cast are a handful



"It really looks like you're in the 3D version of *My Bloody Valentine*."

of other young actors, including Kerr Smith and model turned actress, Jamie King. As far as the story? Patrick told us that the love triangle from the original (complete with the original character names) remains in the redux. "Absolutely," he assured us. "It wouldn't be a *Valentine* movie without a love triangle," he said laughing.

And apparently, it wouldn't be a horror movie without Tom Atkins, either. While scouting locations for the film's mine scenes in Pittsburgh, Lussier learned that veteran genre actor Tom Atkins (whose credits include *Creepshow* and *The Fog*, among countless others) lived nearby. Being a huge fan of his work, Lussier immediately expanded the role of the Sheriff and cast Atkins to play him. A face familiar mainly to '80s horror fans, this will be the highest profile role Atkins has enjoyed in years. "He was perfect for the film," Patrick told us. "He added such a great weight

Quotable Quote: "Beware of Harry Warden!" - Al Humphreys (*My Bloody Valentine*)

to the story, and such a richness to his character. Plus he's the sweetest guy to work with, and we had a great time with him." With that out of the way, there was one more thing I had to know about Atkins. Does he still have the legendary mustache? "Absolutely!" Lussier said in a wry tone. "I was shocked at how great his hair was [laughs]. Tom Atkins is the silver fox."

With all of those pieces in place we find ourselves back at the biggest question. Why 3D? Patrick explained the logic: "3D is all about selling depth and claustrophobia. There's a reason *Journey To The Center Of The Earth* was done in 3D. There's something about the confined space of the caves and seeing long vanishing point lines, where you have dimensional space all around you. We were sent to Pittsburgh largely because of the tax credit, and within three days of being there we had 80% of the locations and we realized that not only were they pretty perfect for the story, but how much they would accentuate the 3D."

Given the mixed track record horror has when it comes to 3D, the question begged to be asked, would we see any popping eyeballs like in *Friday the 13th Part 3*? "Wouldn't we be remiss if we didn't?", Patrick said with a laugh. "I will say that we may have something like that, and we may have a lot more 'oh my' moments that can go into the 3D slasher movie canon."

Some fans may remember that Lussier's last job was as a "visual consultant" on Lionsgate's J-horror remake of *The Eye*. Any fears about a similar PG-13 rating being assigned to *Valentine* can be thrown out the window, as Patrick assured us this movie won't fail to live up to its name. "That's why we made it," he told us. "Our feeling from the start was you didn't make a movie called *My Bloody Valentine* to be a PG-13

shrinking violet. We wanted to kind of push that envelope as best as we could, and lean over the edge of what's acceptable." Effects for the film are being handled by Gary Tunncliffe, who Lussier swears turned out some of the best work of his career for *Valentine*. He must have been busy because the body count promises to be quite high, with twenty-two people dying in the first fourteen minutes alone.

So what's not to love about this new *My Bloody Valentine*? Here you have a 3D, R-rated slasher film with a high body count, being produced by a group of massive horror fans, shot in Pittsburgh (the site of some of George Romero's best genre work), and coming complete with the big screen return of genre legend Tom Atkins. Is Lussier nervous about living up to expectations?

"The pressure that we all felt when we were making it was to get the 3D right. [It was] to not fuck that element up," he said. "Once we crossed those hurdles, we began to realize that the thing that was working above and beyond anything was the fact that we had a really strong story and some great actors, all of whom were embracing the whole process and bringing so much to the table. [The film is] first and foremost terrifying, but it's also an incredibly satisfying story with characters that are incredibly rich and vibrant."

Come January 16th, 2009, horror fans in the US will decide for themselves how terrifying *My Bloody Valentine* turned out to be. If you happen to live in a market without a digital 3D ready screen, the film will also be presented in a traditional version, so you don't have to worry about missing out on it in theaters. The first trailer will reportedly appear before prints of *Saw V* this Halloween, with an official website to follow.

NEWS BITS

Warner Bros. announced that they are developing a prequel to the 2007 blockbuster, *J. Am Legend*. It was revealed that Will Smith will reprise his role as Robert Neville, one of the lone survivors of "zombified" Earth. Director Francis Lawrence is set to once again lead the reins in a story focusing on how New Yorkers can... to be struck on by the... deadly plague that turned them into nocturnal creatures.

The 1987 Mickey Rourke/Robert De Niro supernatural thriller, *Angel Heart*, is set for remake treatment with Michael De Luca now-attached as the producer. De Luca, for those keeping score, has produced a number of hit films over the past few years, including *Blade 2*, *21* and *Ghost Rider*. *Angel Heart* tells the story of a private detective named Harry Angel who is hired to find a missing person, and is thrust into a world of voodoo, black magic and murder.

In conjunction with the release of Friday the 13th in February 2009, Anchor Bay is working on an all-encompassing documentary on the "Friday" series entitled *His Name Was Jason*. They have currently interviewed the majority of cast and crew of all eleven films, plus the upcoming renewal. Look for more info on this release next issue!

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Twilight Falls by Jessica Dwyer



It is nearly midnight at the Eugene, Oregon Barnes and Noble. The date is August 1st and the store is open later than normal. It is packed to the gills with customers sporting T-shirts or buttons that say things like "Team Edward" or "Team Jacob." Looking around one would guess that there were at least 200 people or more. Most of them are female, but there are actually a few guys interspersed in the crowd. The ages range from 13 to 40 or older. There is excitement in the air, the reason for this when the clock strikes 12:00 we get to purchase *Breaking Dawn*.

Breaking Dawn is the last book in the *Twilight* saga, a teen book series set in a world of vampires and werewolves. The series has become one of the biggest literary phenomena's in the last few years, not since *Harry Potter* has a book and its characters grabbed hold of the public so tightly. *Breaking Dawn's* release on August 2nd was HUGE. I was one of the many who pre-ordered the book at my local Barnes and Noble and attended the midnight release. Across the country midnight kick-offs were held with various activities, some even hosting concerts. Three million copies were printed of the book's first run, and nearly half that number sold in the first day it was available! The Eugene release was well done, with a prom photo area where guests could have their pictures taken ala high school (the characters were just grinning in the books). There were *Twilight* themed drinks for sale in the coffee bar, trivia contests going on throughout the night, and giveaways!

These books and their characters come from the mind of author Stephanie Meyer. She has stated that the idea for *Twilight* came to her from a dream, and not long after the vision she had the first draft finished. In her dream, a teenage girl and a vampire are stirring in a field. The girl is in love with the vampire, but the vampire wants to drink her blood and kill her. This scene actually wound up in *Twilight* and optimizes the problems that the main characters have to work through: Fighting the nature of a vampire and the obsessive, nearly self-destructive, love of a teenage girl.

When it was first released, *Twilight* was met with mixed reviews, but after word of mouth, people started swapping copies of the book with their friends. A young adult novel, *Twilight* crossed over with adults who started to read the books as well. The story tells of Bella Swan, who moves to the very real town of Forks, Washington to live with her father Charlie, a local police officer. Forks is quite the culture shock for Bella who lived in Florida prior. Washington isn't exactly known for its sunny weather, and Forks has rain and clouds 90% of the year, or so it seems to her.

She eventually meets the Cullen family, specifically Edward Cullen. The Cullens are all amazingly beautiful, but for some reason it seems that Edward hates her. Eventually, Bella realizes that there is something very different about this family, and that Edward doesn't in fact hate her... it's that he wants her far too much. As you would guess, the Cullens are a group of vampires who have chosen Forks, Washington due to the weather, as it aides in their ability to appear human. Sunlight doesn't kill them - they actually sparkle like angels when it hits them (they obviously aren't human when this occurs).

Edward's "father" is named Carlisle, and he's a doctor. It's a testament to Carlisle's self-control that he can do his job around all the blood he's forced to deal with in his profession. He and his "family" have sworn to no longer drink human blood. They feed on the wild animals that stalk the woods of Forks (bears are a particular favorite). The problem is that Bella smells way too good, and it causes Edward pain to be around her. On top of this, a group of renegade vamps show up and start causing even more trouble for the Cullens and Bella. This couple attempts to figure out a way to be with each other (in an impossible relationship) while Edward has to defend his newfound love from these renegades.

The story isn't new in terms of vampires trying to go straight, or a human falling in love with a vampire... but Meyer makes things interesting with a decent backstory for each of the characters. This new breed of vampire is also intriguing, with the fact that sunlight doesn't kill them, but makes them appear ethereal. Meyer's vampires, when

"created" also appear to gain special powers or abilities when becoming immortal. For example, Edward can read minds, but strangely, not Bella. The family dynamic is also a bonus to the story. The Cullens are interesting characters.

Alice, one of Edward's

"sisters" is a fan favorite. She's a psychic, but she's also overly energetic when it comes to helping her family and the ones she loves. She doesn't remember her human life at all, and can only recall waking up a vampire. Rosalie, the other sister, is a complex character who, from the beginning of book one, doesn't like Bella. She's also considered one of the most beautiful creatures to grace the world. Esme, Edward's "mother" is a sweet and loving woman. She was turned by Carlisle years earlier when he found her after a suicide attempt that was inspired by the death of her infant son. Esme, even though she is not much older in appearance than her children, is very much a mother to them just as Carlisle is the father of the family. Jasper, Edward's "brother" and the husband of Alice was in the Civil War. He was brought into the vampire world not by Carlisle but another vampire. He's got a very dark and mysterious past and constantly struggles with his urge to drink human blood. He has the power to control emotions, ironically enough. Alice saw him in one of her visions, finding him years after he's being turned. Emmett is Rosalie's husband, and is one of the most physically powerful of the Cullen family. Living in the South back in the 1930s, Emmett had the misfortune of being attacked by a bear. Rosalie found him, bleeding and dying, and brought him back to Carlisle asking for him to be turned.

As you can see, each member of the family has their own story, and for a young adult novel these stories are quite adult. Suicide, death, violence, and tragedy all seem to be a pre-requisite to becoming a vampire. But vampires aren't the only supernatural characters in the book. Following a trend that started some years ago, werewolves are the vampire's enemies, and there is a pack of Lycans near Forks in the town of La Push. Meyer didn't skimp on the mythology in her books. She created a deep Native American storyline for the skinwalkers, making them a part of the Quileute Indian tribe. The Indian shape shifters are side to the vampires, or as they call them "The Cold Ones." The powers of the pack are only activated when there are a large number of vampires around.



Carlisle's family has a truce with the tribe, but this truce is tested by the relationship that Bella and Edward share. Bella's best friend is one of the Quileute Indians. His name is Jacob Black and his father, Billy, is the direct descendant of the last chief of the tribe. Jacob becomes a very prominent character after the first book, his story is complex as he winds up the main rival for Bella's affections.

There are many villains that come into play during Meyer's books. In *Twilight* we have the three rogues who plague Bella and the Cullen family: James, Victoria, and Laurent. There is also the coven known as the Volturi, a type of vampire police force/but that lives in Italy. The Volturi's job is to keep the vampire's existence a secret. They have done this successfully for thousands of years, but problems begin whenever they realize that Bella, a human, knows of the Cullen's true nature. The members of the Volturi

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each have a special gift they utilize in order to maintain power and control over the vampire world.

So do the books live up to the hype? That's really up to the reader. If you go by the millions of fans out there, then yes, they really do. Twilight has spawned hundreds of websites and fan clubs online (and off). There are groups called Twilight and Twilight Moms (for the older fans of the books) who are obsessive about the novels. There are the camps of Jacob or Edward fans which are a friendly (and sometimes not so friendly) rivalry. Reproductions of Bella's jewelry are sold alongside T-shirts and hats. And then there is Forks, Washington... Forks has become a Mecca for fans of the books, and the town has welcomed them with open arms. There are now Twilight Tours of the town; city officials have chosen houses that look similar to those in the novels to include on the tour; they have added a sign for a parking space that is reserved at the local hospital for "Doctor Cullen," local restaurants even have the "Bella Burger." The money generated by the fans making the pilgrimage to Forks boosted the economy of the logging town which sorely needed it. It's also a nod nod to Bram Stoker in the fact that Meyer never actually went to Forks before writing the books, but noted the despoils of the city and the surrounding area thanks to her research, much like Stoker did with Transylvania when he wrote Dracula. With all of the mania surrounding the books, it wasn't long before a film version was set into motion.

Last year, Summit Entertainment picked up the rights to film a version of the first novel. When the film was announced, the web exploded with fans discussing who they thought was the best person to play their beloved characters. Actor names were tossed back and forth, one of the most common being that of *Hannah Rising* star Gaspard Ulliel. Humorously enough, an actor from the *Harry Potter* franchise, Robert Pattinson, won the much-debated role of Edward. Robert was a surprise choice to many, and he was met with quite a bit of resistance from some of the more die-hard Edward fans. Since the announcement things have changed. Thanks to the release of trailers and footage from the film as well as photos, Pattinson has been embraced by fans of the books. At the San Diego Comic-Con this year, the Twilight panel was nearly unable to be heard due to the screaming of fans in the audience when Rob appeared on stage. Every time he tried to speak it was as if the Beatles were performing.

Bella is to be played by Kristen Stewart who honor fans can recognize from the



Foreign character posters for Twilight

the Cullens more of a pack, like arctic wolves in terms of coloring and dress. If you've seen the movie posters, you'll notice that all of them dress in varying shades of grey. "The vampires themselves don't wear their traditional dark clothes," the director explains, "The Cullens themselves all wear these varying shades of grey, silver, and these whites. They all kind of shimmer and look fabulous." Looking great isn't all there is to being a vampire though, that's where Robert Pattinson comes into play as Edward, who has taken on the challenge of playing the character with gusto. Stephanie Meyer gave him a sneak peek at the first chapters of *Midnight Sun* (a retelling of *Twilight* from Edward's perspective) before other people got a look at it to help him get ready for the part. So what drew Pattinson to a role in another iconic book series? "He sort of is seen as the hero; he's got all the super powers and he's eternal and everything..." Pattinson begins, "I guess what I found interesting is the fact that he is essentially the hero in the story, but violently serene he's the hero at every point. Even when he does heroic things he sees himself as selfish, as the most ridiculously selfish evil creature around. And I kind of like that. He sort of refuses to accept Bella's love for him, but at the same time can't help it. He kind of needs it. I liked it because there's not many stories like it. He's walking this incredibly fine line between an object being the love of your life and also the thing that you want to destroy the most. Which is nice, and everything in his life is falling apart around him while he's kind of trying to create some kind of relationship with the girl, which seems to him completely and utterly impossible. But it happens." The duality in Edward's nature is very apparent when you are reading the novels. He can at times be sweet and loving, but then the dark side rears its head. You don't try hurting those he loves or you'll be sorry. How did Pattinson deal with playing a character that has such a split personality? "It's good. It's difficult to figure out the arc," the actor explains, "But once he initially realizes he's got more control than he thought. He kind of fluctuates between accepting he's this all powerful being and then... he's kind of human. He forgets about who he is from all these different influences. He was so stale for 80 years. I mean all he wanted to do was die or become human again, and when the girl comes... it kind of reawakens these senses that haven't been around for ages. So it kind of keeps fluctuating all the time. Even the fact that someone finds him attractive is absolutely bizarre to him."

As for influences from other films, Pattinson went with another tortured soul to draw upon when creating Edward for the big screen. "When I was initially thinking about it, there are bits of *Rabel* without a Cause and stuff which I thought would be interesting to incorporate into it," he says, "But Stephanie Meyers makes it implicitly clear that these vampires are not like other vampires. So it gives you a chance to completely re-evaluate what a vampire is. They are just accepted at the schools and stuff, but they are seen as outsiders."

"You have to figure out how much humanity you can have, and I think also the interesting thing is it's a struggle for them to keep this humanity. Because there are so few vampires in the world of *Twilight* that can actually look human, so I think they are fighting against every single natural instinct they have all the time. I mean all of the Cullens are pretending through force of will to be something they are not, but because of Carlisle they think it's the right thing to do, even though it's denying what comes naturally."

The film's release is one of the most highly anticipated of the year, and in yet another *Harry Potter* connection, when the newest *Harry Potter* film, *The Half Blood Prince*, was bumped to an '09 release the studio moved *Twilight* quickly into its vacated November 21st spot. The books have been called allegories, touching on issues about growing up, sex, morals, and self control, just to name a few. All of these are probably true depending on your point of view. It wouldn't be the first time that vampires were used as a metaphor for something else and it won't be the last.



Sam Raimi produced thriller *The Messengers*. The film's director, Catherine Hardwicke, had a unique way of seeing if her two leads were compatible and had them perform a love scene together as a sort of audition. Hardwicke herself is no stranger to making films about teenagers in extreme situations. She began as a production designer, going on to direct the film *Thirteen*, which she also co-wrote with actress Nikki Reed (who is playing Rosalie in *Twilight*). Her next film was *Lords of Dogtown* about the Z-Boys. Her follow up to that film was about another teenage girl in a crisis, *The Nativity Story*. Hardwicke has a gift for making her movies beautiful, and *Twilight* is no exception as it allowed her to pull from her designer background as well as her time as an architect. The Cullen's house in the books is deep in the woods near Forks. Hardwicke went with that theme of an organic life lived by the vampires, trying to blend in with nature and be a part of it instead of being outside of it. "What we are doing is with the Pacific Northwest as a character," the director told *Entertainment Weekly*, "we were making rain outside. We brought in trees and stuff, we're trying to do all we can, put more trees, make you really think you're in the rain forest. The Cullen's house feels like a tree house."

Part of this carries over into the characters themselves. Hardwicke decided to make

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The Day the Earth Stood Still

by Jessica Dwyer



12.12.08 THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL

As pointed out in previous issues, remakes in Hollywood have become the norm these days. Most of the films which have been chosen for a re-worked treatment originate from the '60s, such as the recent *Hitcher* and soon-to-be released *Friday* the 13th. There have been others taken from even further back like *Dawn of the Dead* and *Planet of the Apes*.

Depending on the movie, responses vary from "yes, the original is dated and really needs the treatment" to "For the love of god, why?!" Such is the way, though when it's one of your favorite films that a studio decides to change and possibly modernize it for good or ill. As said, it's films of a more recent nature that are typically being remade, but 20th Century Fox has decided to go all the way back to the '50s for one of their big Christmas releases this year with *The Day the Earth Stood Still*.

The original film was released in 1951, a time in the world when nuclear war was always right at our door...or so we thought. Kids were huddling in hallways or beneath their desks during drills on what should happen if a bomb went off down the street. Fallout shelters were built in back yards (just in case), television was starting to take the place of the radio as a family's main source of entertainment, and rock 'n' roll was starting to cause rifts between parents and teenagers who wanted to grow their hair out and wear blue suede shoes.

The Cold War soon dominated the news and fear of the "Reds" started grabbing hold of Americans to the point that neighbors began to look at one another with a very careful eye (sound familiar?). McCarthy's hearings were soon under way and Hollywood, and the world in general, would never be the same again.

Enter into the movie theaters, a film about an alien and his big robot. "Day" was a timely piece of cinema and to this day is considered one of the sci-fi genre's best films of all time. The story is simple, yet it wasn't the typical throw away fare expected of a sci-fi flick at the time. A spacecraft lands near Washington and an alien named Klaatu walks out and is met by an army of tanks and soldiers. He is on a mission of peace, but as usual humans are suspicious and nervous around things they don't understand. A soldier shoots Klaatu and out comes the icon of the film: Gort, A huge robot (and Klaatu's body guard). Gort fires all the weapons in the general vicinity.

Klaatu is taken to a hospital where he tells people in charge that his mission is too speak with the leaders of the world. When he's told that this request is nearly impossible, he escapes and tries to blend in with normal humans. He meets Helen, a young widow and her son Bobby. He befriends them, and with Bobby's help, learns that not all humans are a lost cause. Bobby takes Klaatu to various locations around Washington, including Arlington National Cemetery where Bobby's father is buried, having been killed in World War 2.

Eventually Klaatu meets one of the country's leading scientists and explains to him the direness of the situation. Gort is one of many robotic soldiers created by other alien races to defend themselves against Earth. The aliens are concerned because humanity now has nuclear weapons; they are afraid for their safety as humans seem so very warlike. The scientist asks Klaatu to show a small demonstration of his

power, as proof for those who might not believe him. The next day Klaatu finds Helen, whose boyfriend Tom has shown his true colors and plans on outing Klaatu to the authorities. In a scene that has become cinematic gold, Klaatu and Helen stand in an elevator that suddenly stops...as the rest of the world comes to a stand still. Klaatu and Gort have out power to the entire planet...that's the "small" demonstration of their power.

Klaatu explains to Helen that if humanity doesn't learn his lesson of peace the Earth is doomed. On top of this, if Klaatu is killed, Gort has instructions to destroy the world. Klaatu then tells her those famous words that every good *Star Wars* or *Army of Darkness* fan knows: "Klaatu barada nikto."

Of course something does happen and Helen has to go to Gort and relay the message. When all is said and done, the film ends with a speech given by Klaatu to all of mankind. He warns them about Gort and his fellow robots that have the power to deal with any type of violence that might be brought about by humans. He tells them to abandon their wars and hatred and join the aliens in a peaceful co-existence. The decision is theirs. He then leaves and the movie ends with the dangling question...what will humanity do?

For this 2008 remake, there have, of course, been some changes to the film. This time around Helen appears to be a scientist herself (although she still has a son, this time named Jacob) and is played by Jennifer Connelly. She is taken as part of a group of scientists to a facility where Klaatu is being held for information. Klaatu, played by Keanu Reeves, reveals that his body is human but he is not. Gort is in the film, but he is described as not appearing as the two legged creature we know from the original (despite the lesser poster, shown on this page). He is seen briefly in the trailer and is supposedly more biological than robot. The cast of the film is rounded out by talent like Kathy Bates and John Cleese. Jacob is played by Jaden Smith, whose father Will Smith is no stranger to aliens himself.

The movie is directed by Scott Derrickson, who wrote and directed horror fare like *Helldorado*, *Inferno* and *The Exorcism of Emily Rose*. He'll also be taking part in another well known film as co-writer of *The Birds*, a remake of the Alfred Hitchcock classic set for next year. Day is produced by Erwin Stoff, who not only manages Keanu Reeves (and has since he was sixteen years old) but was producer on many of Reeves' films over the past few years. He was producer on *Constantine*, *A Scanner Darkly*, and even Bill and Ted's Bogus Journey. Erwin, not surprisingly, said Reeves was his only choice to play Klaatu.

The film's score is composed by Tyler Bates, who took the original film's music (by Bernard Herrman (*Vertigo*, *Jason and the Argonauts*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *Lost in Space*)) and retooled it from its electronic sound to a more orchestral feel. You'll be able to hear more of Bates work next year in *The Watchmen* and Rob Zombie's *Tyrannosaurus Rex* (he also previously worked with Zombie on *Halloween* and *Grindhouse*).

Obviously in this day and age of terrorism and the war in Iraq, the film's message rings even more true, which is why, no doubt, Fox chose to dust it off and remake it. But the question is this...will audiences respond? We already saw with the lackluster performance of *The Invasion* that it's not always a sure bet that previous hits before will appeal to today's marketplace, even with star power behind it. But the film does have a lot going for it. With an extended clip recently shown on the Fox network we saw more of the special effects (which look good), and the story seems to not have been changed much, just tailored for a current audience. Actors like Cleese and Bates bring their A-games to everything they do and Connelly has a good track record.

Will audiences accept Keanu Reeves as a benevolent alien? He's got a history with sci-fi fans, but the last time he leapt into that pool was *A Scanner Darkly* two years ago, and while it wasn't a hit, it does have its followers. *The Day the Earth Stood Still* is a great opportunity for Keanu to get back into the genre that delivered the biggest hits of his career.



Klaatu barada nikto



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by Jessica Dwyer



Twilight isn't the only vampire book series to be put on film of late, vampires are becoming big business thanks to a huge resurgence in the fiction market over the past few years. Charlaine Harris's series of "Southern Vampire Mysteries," known as Sookie Stackhouse, hit shelves in 2001. The books told the story of Sookie Stackhouse, a young teeny-something waitress living in Louisiana. Sookie has a secret; she's telepathic and can read people's thoughts. This isn't exactly a gift, it's more of a curse for her as she finds out all the dirty secrets the people of her home town hide. Like it or not. Some years before, vampires decided to "come out of the coffin" and reveal themselves as real (un)living and (un)breathing creatures. This was due to the creation of synthetic blood that was originally made for surgery and medical patients, but also wound up being a food substitute for vampires.



Vampires aren't the only supernatural beings that live in this world. Over the course of the books, as we follow Sookie through her adventures as she encounters werewolves, faeries, and witches Sookie gets sucked into the vampires world thanks to a relationship with her first real boyfriend (and vampire) Bill.

Harris's novels are entertaining and well written with a lot of wit and comedy thrown in with the very dark side of the supernatural world in which they are set. Sookie is nearly killed a few times over as the book's progress and no one is ever truly safe as characters you thought untouchable meet their end. All the novels are told via Sookie's point of view as she has no problem giving her opinion while telling her story.

Harris creates a complex world that is a nice allegory to what we see in the real world today in terms of bigotry and racism. The vampires have to deal with intolerance and threats from all sides. There are groups like the Fellowship of the Sun, a militant church organization that hates the vampires and wants them dead. Then there are the drug pushers.

Vampire blood, when taken in small doses, makes people feel stronger, better, and increases the libido. "V-Juice" as it's called is also incredibly addictive and dangerous. Some people will go crazy with only one dose, and the effects can be scary. The pushers and the people known as "drainers" know that most vampires aren't going to be happy with losing their blood as it normally causes them to die. But that doesn't matter to the dealers. Although it's a dangerous operation, the profits are high, but so is the body count. But of course there is the sexual side to the vampire's world, and that side is epitomized in the "Fangbanger." A term coined to describe vampire groupies. Fangbangers are humans who live for the thrill of the bite. They don't care about the danger they place themselves in, nor the fact that they aren't looked upon highly by humans or even some of the vampires that they idolize. Businesses like the vampire bar Fangtasia cater to these types of humans and turn up the vampire stick to a level few with goth music, all black clothes, and even selling T-shirts with the name of the bar written in blood on them. It's a win-win for the vamps because they make a nice profit and have a nice supply of willing blood donors, even if it feels a bit like selling out. And the sex isn't either.

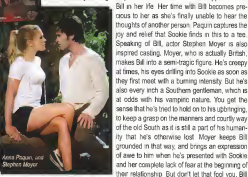
This world is what attracted writer/director Alan Ball to create the new HBO series *TrueBlood*, named after the synthetic blood substitute that allowed the vampires to emerge in the first place. Ball was looking for a book to read while waiting for the dentist when he found Harris's first novel. "I was browsing in a bookstore one day and I saw this book titled *Dead Until Dark*, which had the tag line 'Maybe having a vampire for a boyfriend isn't such a bright idea.'" Ball says, "I thought that sounded like fun, so I bought the book - the first in Charlaine Harris's series - and I could not put it down. I loved the way it was funny and scary and sexy and romantic, and it had a lot of interesting things to say about what it's like to be other than mainstream. And it's not just the vampires. Sookie is a telepath and there are other non-human characters in the story. I became addicted and once I finished the book, I thought, 'Where's the next one?' I'd been waiting to pitch a new series to HBO, and I thought this would make a terrific series."

Ball is no stranger to quirky characters and series. He was the man behind the crit-

cally acclaimed *Six Feet Under* which starred Dexter's Michael C. Hall, a series about a funeral home and the lives (and deaths) of the people who run it. "I was looking to do another series because *Six Feet Under* was such a great experience. TV, especially with the advent of the premium cable channels, is in many ways a much better place to work as a writer than movies." He says, "In a movie, you've got to pack it all into two hours, and movies are becoming more and more like amusement park rides. TV is more like a novel. You can stay with characters over a long period of time. You can dramatize their struggle with life, rather than dramatizing the struggle with a particular issue that gets resolved over two hours. I think fans of *Six Feet Under* will like the show because there's a lot of moral complexity in it, which is something that always fascinates me." Ball continues, "We grow up with notions of good and evil, and the belief that good will always triumph, but if you take a look at the world around you, that's obviously not the case. Also, one of the things we kept coming back to on *Six Feet Under* was the idea that when you do the right thing, the moral thing, a lot of times it makes your life harder and more complicated. And that's interesting. But *TrueBlood* is different from *Six Feet Under* in that it has a much lighter tone. It's more of an adventure. It's a story and a world you've never seen before. It's fun. It's a show I would watch."

The series differs in some aspects from the books which is the case in many adaptations. "The first season is the first book in the series, with some new stories created for the characters of Jason, Tara, and Sam to provide balance," Ball says, "One of the things I love about Charlaine's books is the way she treats the supernatural world so matter-of-factly. We're trying to do the same thing in our production design and the way we shoot everything. We want to keep the supernatural rooted in nature, so that it's just more nature than we're used to in everyday life. I'm trying to avoid all the vampire clichés. I wanted just about every vampire movie, and most of them told me what I don't want to do. I wanted to avoid the crazy contact lenses, the opera music, the blue light. *TrueBlood* takes place in a small town in rural Louisiana. It's hot and humid and there's not a lot to do there. I want it to be rooted in the characters, and seem like it could be really happening, and not some fantasy world."

Ball's certainly surrounded himself with a cast worthy of a great story. First, cast as Sookie is Oscar winner Anna Paquin. Paquin's big thickly lashed eyes and sweetly delivered voice as a modern Southern lady brings Sookie to life. She's tough but gentle and meets the terrifying reality of the supernatural head on when it comes at her. And even with her innocent experience in the relationship department, Paquin is sexy, as Sookie is finally starting to experience a real desire with the appearance of



Anna Paquin, and Stephen Moyer

is still a vampire and Moyer doesn't let you forget it.

The rest of the cast includes Ryan Kwanten as Jason, Rutina Wesley as Tara, Nelsan Ellis as the unapologetically fangbaiting Lafayette, and Sam Trammell as Sookie's boss Sam who has a supernatural secret of his own. *TrueBlood* airs on HBO Sunday nights with repeats throughout the week. Vampire fans and snail TV fans in general should check it out. It's nice to see an adult vampire series that's allowed the freedom to be as gory as it wants to be without fear. And be sure to read the books that inspired the show, the newest of which, *From Dead to Worse*, was released in hardcover this past May.

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DEREK MEARS: MEET THE NEW JASON PART 2

Last issue we featured a first look at the new Jason Voorhees, Derek Mears, including an exclusive interview. We couldn't fit the whole thing in last issue, so we opted to hold back some key Qs. Here they are for your enjoyment:

HorrorHound: It wouldn't be a Friday the 13th film unless a sequel was discussed. Is there already plans to bring you back for *redux-2*?

Derek Mears: I have a possible option with Platinum Dunes for another project. It doesn't have to be a Friday the 13th. It could be something different. I don't know if they want me back. It depends on what the fans think and how the movie goes. I hope so, because I love the characters.

HH: What can fans expect when the mask comes off?

DM: What did Scott say? He said [the look] is a combination of Part 2 and 4. What's under the mask is so great!

HH: What is your personal favorite "Jason" from the Friday series?

DM: I love Ted White's Jason from Part 4. Brookier is really cool. I can answer this one a number of ways.

HH: Was there any special training involved for the role?

DM: Yes. They really wanted Jason functional. When I first met them I didn't know if they wanted me to bulk up and put weight on to be similar to previous Jasons. They said they wanted me to look like I was living in the woods. I started this training that included a lot of Olympic lifting, helping make my

body strong, and not just weight strong. Stuff like that.

HH: As a fan of the series, did you ever find yourself saying to the director, "No Jason wouldn't do that!"?

DM: Actually yes, I did that a couple times. I saw what I believed in the character, where I would stop and ask why would Jason do this? I would approach Scott and say "Hey, this is what I'm thinking" and they would really listen.

HH: Is there anyone you would like to thank for getting you in the position to play one of your favorite cinematic characters?

DM: First and foremost, Scott Stoddard. I am nothing without the team and he is a big part of it, his ideas and designs. You want to do something new, but be respectful of what came before, so there was a lot of balance. There has been eleven incarnations of this character and you have to follow certain rules. Scott helped me a lot with this. I'd also have to thank Rick Baker for giving me my first film role (*Wild Wild West*). I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for that. He said I had a good body for doing monsters [laughs]. I am very lucky. I also want to thank Andrew Form and Brad Fuller!

HH: Last question. Can Jason die?

DM: Yeah! I would say I am not saying he does or doesn't, but the film is based in reality. He is human. He can die. It's possible, but I am not saying if he does or doesn't!

10 QUESTIONS WITH Darren Lynn Bousman

Each issue we sit down with a different horror director to discuss film, home life, and other assorted tidbits that happen to come into play. The result? 10 Random Questions. This issue: The man behind a trio of successful Saw sequels (*Parts II-IV*) and the highly anticipated upcoming horror musical - *Repo!* The Genetic Opera. Darren Lynn Bousman! HorrorHound was able to steal a few minutes away from Mr. Bousman's busy life to find out those ten seemingly random questions that you, the readers, may or may not have wanted to know.

HorrorHound: If you could place anyone in the world in one of Jigsaw's Saw traps, who would it be?

Darren Lynn Bousman: There are a million people I would put in a saw trap. I'm trying to think of someone I can say without getting myself into trouble [laughs]. My middle school creative writing teacher who told me I would amount to nothing!

HH: What is your favorite Disney animated feature?

DLB: Probably *The Emperor's New Groove*.

HH: Cuba or Argentina?

DLB: I would have to say Argentina. I grew up with most of his movies. I think I have every one of his DVDs.

HH: What was your very first job?

DLB: It was delivering newspapers. I was a classic mid-west kid delivering newspapers to make a buck, when I was like, ten.

HH: Name the greatest metal song ever made.

DLB: Again, going back to childhood, it may not be exactly metal but the first album I ever listened to was AC/DC. I think anything by them - I was kinda addicted to them.

HH: What is your favorite TV show?

DLB: I could answer that in six hours. *Lost* is my favorite TV series.

- I don't know what I would do without *Lost*. *Weeks* is another of my favorite TV shows. There are so many - how about *Dexter*? I could go on forever, I am addicted to TV!

HH: What's your favorite bonus feature to find on a DVD?

DLB: You know, I have to tell you, I hate DVD bonus feature documentaries. They always leave out the good shit, because making movies is not all rainbows and kittens. There's screaming, cussing, throwing people under the bus, there's backstabbing. It's very rare to find a real look behind the scenes in a featurette. To find one make's me very happy.

HH: Name the first horror movie you ever saw?

DLB: *Henry, Portrait of a Serial Killer*. It was a double feature followed directly by *Last House on the Left*. I was eleven years old. A side note, the first actor I ever met in Los Angeles was Michael Rooker.

HH: What are your hobbies outside of filmmaking?

DLB: I have a dog [laughs]. - umm, I am addicted to PS3. I collect comic books also, vintage '50s and '60s comics.

HH: How many Saw Billy puppets do you own?

DLB: I own one of the real ones. There are five currently in existence, but James Wan has one, I have one and three were sold on eBay. They are shamelessly making money off the Saw franchise right now - but I do have one of the originals.

Darren's exciting new horror opera, *Repo!* finally opens in theaters (limited release) on November 7th, with a DVD follow-up planned for early 2009. Check out www.repo-opera.com for more information on the film, including how to get a copy of the movie soundtrack!



CHOICE CUTS:

HORROR ON DVD



Dumbled down to a direct-to-DVD series, *Sony Pictures' Anaconda 3* (October 21st) is a disappointing follow-up to the original. *David Hasselhoff* (yes, David Hasselhoff), the movie centers around a mercenary who is hired to capture a dangerous snake. No bonus features are planned.

Legend Films are dusting off a couple *Lois Lugg* "classics" on October 21st in the form of the Jean YVES ESCOFFIER directed *The Devil Bit and Ed Wood's Bride of the Monster*. Both films are being presented in restored black and white and colorized! A must have for any fan of the golden age of cinema!

On December 2nd, night is here for the remake theatrical release, the original *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (DVD and Blu-Ray) with impressive features: commentary tracks, deleted scenes, making-of, a history of flying saucers, theatrical trailer galleries, *Harry Belafonte* and *Claydon North* features, etc.

Dead of Winter, a new direct-to-DVD film from Lionsgate, hits retail outlets on November 28th. The *Gothic-style* slasher (also known as *Killer Movie*) focuses on a weekly television shoot in the dead of winter that goes horribly wrong. No bonus features are set to be included on this disc.

On October 14th a box set was released by Sony Home Entertainment collected issues of *Hammer Films*. The two-disc set includes: *The Curse of the Mummy's Tomb*, *The Two Faces of Dr. Jekyll*, *The Gorgon*, and *Scream of Fear*. This is the first time these films have been available on DVD!



On November 11th, *Hellboy II: The Golden Army* (the Universal unleashes a single-disc and three-disc special edition of the Ron Perlman starring sequel). The three-disc set includes the commentary tracks, an annotated comic, deleted scenes, a prologue, production features, making-of collage, etc!

Inspired by the true events surrounding serial killer *Ed Gein* (the *Psycho* Killer), the two-disc focuses on the gruesome murders with added dramatic elements revolving around the police efforts to bring *Kemper* to justice. The DVD (from Lionsgate) hits stores on November 25th with no bonus features.

November 11th sees the release of the delirious *Night Gallery: Season Two*. This Universal Studios release of the great *Rod Serling* (Twilight Zone) hosted TV series includes five discs packed with behind-the-scenes of the series' second season run, with audio commentaries and features included!

Originally released in 2002 by Elite Entertainment, *Synapse Films* will be re-releasing the 1979 *Richard Franklin* film *Patrick* on October 26th. *Unrated* and completely re-mastered, the disc will include a commentary with *Richard Franklin*, plus the original theatrical trailer and television spots.

October 28th sees the release of the long-anticipated *Tomato* title *Poultrygeist: Night of the Chicken Dead*. As if just releasing the film wasn't enough, *Tomato* is packing this film in a three-disc set complete with a feature length behind-the-scenes documentary on the making of *Poultrygeist*!



After years of development, the follow-up to the *Sleepaway Camp* series, *"Return to..."* hits DVD on November 4th from *Majestic Home Entertainment*. The film tells of *Camp Minerva*, where a series of murders plague campers. This also marks the last film Isaac Hayes worked on.

The latest DVD premiere from *Dark Sky Films*, copies the Spanish horror film from the director of *Fuente O' G* (*Jandro Ortez*) with art direction by *Pilar Revenga* (Oscar winner for *Pan's Labyrinth*). *Shiver* will hit stores on October 28th, but looks in the bonus feature department (the trailer is attached).

The successful horror thriller *The Strangers* hits DVD on October 21st in an unrated format. Outside of some *Jack Bauer* box art, the flick will include deleted scenes and shown in theaters and a special feature on the production process of the film. With a sequel in the works, look for an eventual double disc!

Trailer Park of Terror (entering *Travis Alos* and *Nichole Hitz*) hits DVD on October 21st through *Summit Entertainment*. The film follows our troubled teens are stuck in the middle of a fair park when their bus crashes. *Hellbilly* reviews and all, this flick is based off an impressive comic book.

Robert England joins past legend *Jenna Jackson* in her latest horror outing, *Zombie Strippers*. The DVD (hitlist stores October 28th) will include a director and star (including *Mr. Englund*) commentary track, deleted scenes (with commentary), two featurettes, and a digital copy of the film.

HORROR TALES

Over the past few months, we have received a ton of letters asking from you, the readers. We are happy to find feedback and we're not, so we decided to create a section that is solely focused on your sick and twisted! Thanks for reading in this post!



"I'd like to see you with an interesting letter to grace the pages of the mighty *HorrorHound* magazine. I have just the pictures you need to choose from!"
Trevor Collins



"This, folks was your chance to get the full category of the *Donner* *Talies* Convention, 2004. It took about five hours to complete, and was tons of fun to do! Have you seen it?"
Drew Allen



"I've been a huge fan of *Melvin van Peebles*. I was very young, I wanted to be like my father (which I got about three years ago). I also have a *Golden Taurus* but I have recently lost down! Thanks for the request! It's one of my favorite to pick up when the reward issue comes out!"
Mick Adams



"I just wanted to show you my new Billy the Puppet for you guys, thought you might like it. It was done by a great artist, *Sim Skidz*, working out of *Baby in the Crib* in *Mykonos, NY*."
Kyle Brown

Also on DVD: On December 9th a special box set collector's edition of *I Am Legend* is set for release, which will include two versions of the film, deleted scenes, commentary, and over two hours of bonus features!



VIDEO INVASION

REMEMBERING THE VHS BOOM



BY MATT MOORE



During the '80s video explosion, several small but soon-to-be important companies began releasing key horror and exploitation titles in hopes of drawing attention to their catalogs. While most of these companies had a few hits (and a lot of failures), some stood the test of time and came out noticeably on top. A good number of these companies began to hop on the "horror bandwagon," releasing any title that sounded remotely horror, granting them the shelf space filler and potential rentals needed during this home video craze. Many companies focused on picking up distribution rights to obscure horror titles from overseas as well as the various drive-in "classics" playing at our local venues. Gorgon Video's catalog, however, made up for those less than fulfilling titles that a lot of the fly by nights had coming out at that time.

HISTORY

With the video boom gaining momentum, Gorgon came out of their crypt to enhance our selection with some of the most depraved releases ever put to video. Gorgon Video (a subsidiary of MPI) was an Illinois based company that came into existence in 1982, but it was not until 1983 that Gorgon unleashed their first venture

As with most video companies, the box was a crucial part of the marketing and promotion of each title. Gorgon chose a plastic clamshell case (often seen with Disney videos at the time), however, they wanted it to be bigger. Although these big boxes did tend to hog shelf space, this move also allowed some up and coming "Mom 'n Pop" stores to use the cases in rentals instead of investing more money into additional clamshell cases for the film's nightly rental. Later on, most of Gorgon's titles were re-released and made available in the slimmer (regular) slipcase covers. Smooth distribution was key and by switching to a smaller box more units were able to be shipped at once, keeping up with the demand a lot of the Gorgon titles commanded. Gorgon handled every aspect of distribution within itself (and still do) - a feat that was not often seen in the video days. Most companies dealt with at least one to three chains in order to get their titles onto store shelves.

Out of all the titles released on the Gorgon's label, the most infamous and notorious was the documentary of the macabre, mondo film *Faces of Death*. This is the first film of its kind unleashed onto the video market, however, Mondo Cane was released before *Faces* in theatres. Although *Cane* did not hit video shelves until a



into the VHS frenzy, MPI's creation of Gorgon was in part due to the acquisition of the legendary title *Faces of Death*. Not wishing for it to be associated with the MPI banner, Gorgon was created as a subsidiary to unleash its chaos upon the masses. From the beginning (and still to this day), Gorgon's main purpose was the release of horror/exploitation titles. The driving factor behind this objective was derived from the company's common love for the genre and the like-minded goal to release some of the most obscure, weird, and outright bizarre features to the up and coming home video market place. With this dabbling it allowed us fans, for the first time, the opportunity to view the macabre eye of Mario Bava with his release of *Bay of Blood* (AKA: *Twist of the Death Nerve*) and the creepy, and suspenseful, Bob Clark classic *Death Dream* (AKA: *Dead of Night*), which displayed some of the early works of effects master Tom Savini. Gorgon was able to distribute these types of releases in a way few others were able to do at the time.

few years after *Faces*.

Faces of Death displayed disturbing scenes that left you with the feeling of dread almost simultaneously as the film's images crossed the screen. This single title helped establish Gorgon Video and created a stir about the company and its future in the home video market. This single cassette caused a slew of controversy as well as a surge in rentals - most Mom 'n Pop stores at some point saw the rental of *Faces* supersede some of the larger theatrical blockbusters just debuting on video. This was a surprise to Gorgon as well as the video store owners. Some local proprietors recall problems stemming from the *Faces of Death* series, one situation I found common amongst the owners was that *Faces* was one of the most stolen titles in their library, dwarfing any adult film or common action flick. Most often the box was the only thing you saw on the shelf due to the cassettes' lack of availability in the store.

With the vast popularity of the *Faces of Death* release, Gorgon decided to tap into the "real" horror genre one more time. It released the film *Of the Dead*, this rarely





seen French mondo film was a further step into a darker direction. Over the past few years, *Of the Dead* has become one of the most collectable cassettes on Gorgon's label, along side *Devil Doll* and *Legacy of Horror*. These titles are seldom seen and sometimes can fetch a decent chunk of change on the collector circuit.

As a natural progression of the company, Gorgon slowed and soon stopped releasing films to the video culture. Gorgon hibernated for quite some time, every so often popping up to give us a re-release of the six volumes of *Faces of Death*. With more than a handful of people already skeptical about these shockumentaries, Gorgon created *Faces of Death: Fact or Fiction*. This film helped to extinguish rumors and shed light on some of the questions that had risen over the years.

In recent years, we have seen a video resurgence among the companies that brought us the chaos and carnage we once craved. Some of their titles are finally seeing the light thanks to DVD. Gorgon followed suit with the release of definitive box set for *Faces of Death*. Most of the titles on the Gorgon label have already been released onto DVD (i.e., *Death Dream*, *Bay of Blood*, *Children Shouldn't Play with Dead Things*) while some (*She Beast*, *Panic*, and *The Great Alligator*) still await their US digital format release. This October, Gorgon finally made its triumphant return to the home video market with the release of the first chapter in the *Faces of Death* saga to Blu-Ray. Revealing all the carnage for the first time in high definition, this (now on shelves) will hopefully lead to a resurgence and interest in this subgenre of film and possible hi-def treatments for the other Gorgon catalog titles.

ARTWORK

We all know and love the artwork associated with '80s horror video boxes. Most of us have probably wondered where some of this artwork came from and who created it. Sometimes the answer is quite simple: the film's original one-sheet... while other times there is a lot more to it, as in an original piece of artwork, specifically created for the title's introduction to the horror section. In some cases, the distributor looked outside the US campaign art to find exciting new foreign images. In the case of Gorgon, if the image of the one-sheet got the message across it stayed on the box. One prime example of that is *Children Shouldn't Play with Dead Things*, displaying a colorized

version of the film's leaser poster, as well as the film *Die Sister Die*, whose cover box art was the primary US one-sheet.

With most releases, however, under the Gorgon label, the title was introduced with new original artwork to help promote the film. The bizarre covers that adorned the releases of *Don't Go in the Basement*, *Death Dream*, and *Night of the Bloody Apes* were prime examples of the new and sometimes extreme artwork that premiered on our local shelves. One of the most deranged covers was the artwork found on the original release of *Faces of Death 2*, the mysterious surgeon with scalpel in hand pointing at us the viewers, daring us to take a peek at what lies within and the pictures of the process of decay on a human head at the bottom. Perfect example of macabre artwork working hand in hand with the title it represents.

PROMOTIONS

Gorgon was not big on promo items. Most of the titles they held did not receive the promotional treatment seen with companies such as Vestron and New World. The only film in their catalog that received proper treatment was *Faces of Death*. Outside of video store posters and flyers distributed for the film's initial and secondary release, *Faces* was treated with a counter-top standee, keychain, and even shirts. Gorgon did release a tape in the mid-20s called *Gorgon Video Magazine Vol. 1* which was hosted by the madman from *The Hills Have Eyes*; Michael Berryman. This title was a compilation of scenes from Gorgon's catalog as well as productions in the works, animation, and movie news. Although not like the *trunket* or *freelbie* commonly seen, it still acted as a promo-type video for the company even though it dabbled into movie titles not available on the Gorgon label. Plus an odd note: Michael's performance on the video was quite over the top, almost appearing as though it was targeted at a younger crowd. There were even rumors of a *Gorgon Video Magazine Vol. 2* that sadly never materialized! 🖐

Special thanks to: Susan Moore, Warren Black, Stephanie Marlow, Michael Felsner, and Mike and George at Video Mart Inc. Richmond, VA.



GORGON VIDEO HORROR BODY COUNT:

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| 1. <i>Bay of Blood</i>
(AKA, <i>Twitch of the Death Waves</i>) | 9. <i>Devil in the House of Exorcism</i> | 16. <i>Faces of Death VI</i> | 27. <i>Messiah at Central High</i> |
| 2. <i>Blazing Rituals</i> | 10. <i>Die Sister Die</i> | 19. <i>Faces of Death: Fact or Fiction?</i> | 28. <i>Night of the Bloody Apes</i> |
| 3. <i>Blood Spattered Rodeo, The</i> | 11. <i>Don't Look in the Basement</i> | 20. <i>Frankenstein '80</i> | 29. <i>Of the Dead</i> |
| 4. <i>Brutes and Savages</i> | 12. <i>Dracula's Great Love</i> | 21. <i>Gorgon Video Magazine Vol. 1</i> | 30. <i>Panic</i> |
| 5. <i>Children Shouldn't Play with Dead Things</i> | 13. <i>Faces of Death</i> | 22. <i>Great Alligator, The</i> | 31. <i>Paralyzed</i> |
| 6. <i>Christina</i> | 14. <i>Faces of Death II</i> | 23. <i>Horror Hospital</i> | 32. <i>She Beast</i> |
| 7. <i>Death Dream (AKA, Dead of Night)</i> | 15. <i>Faces of Death III</i> | 24. <i>I Killed Rasputin</i> | 33. <i>Slaughter Hotel</i> |
| 8. <i>Devil Doll</i> | 16. <i>Faces of Death IV</i> | 25. <i>Kiss of the Tarantula</i> | 34. <i>Tower of Evil</i> |
| | 17. <i>Faces of Death V</i> | 26. <i>Legacy of Horror</i> | 35. <i>Worst of Faces of Death, The</i> |

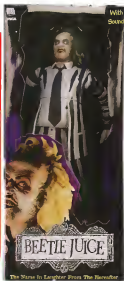
TOY NEWS

As seen on this issue's cover, the long-anticipated *Exorcist* action figure we have all dreamed about is but months away! NECA Toys unveiled at the San Diego Comic-Con this past July their prototype for the Regan MacNeil action figure, which is scheduled to come complete with bed and spinning head. This box set release comes after the "spider-walk" 7" scaled Cult Classic action figure (now in stores - see below) and the "twisted-head" Head Knocker, shipping to stores at the same time this magazine hits newsstands. The *Exorcist* box set, shown here, has been pushed back to a summer '09 release to ensure the mechanics are worked out, but summer can't get here soon enough! Expect a suggested retail price of around \$40.



NECA

Outside of the upcoming Regan MacNeil (in bed), NECA has a number of new Cult Classic action figures either now hitting stores or on the verge... Shown below is the seventh series of the blister-carded action figure line, which features three genre icons: *Beetlejuice*, Regan MacNeil (*Spider-Walk*), and Kurt Russell as Stuntman Mike (*Grindhouse*). The Regan MacNeil action figure (as seen below) comes with a bloody paint deco, however, a clean (unbloody) version has also been made available. Fans of *Beetlejuice* have been waiting nearly five years for NECA to take the time and revisit the license which their action figure division began with. While we are not being treated to the number of characters their original line offered, we did receive an 18" talking figure (at right) and an upcoming *Beetlejuice* 7" figure in wedding attire. NECA's first toy line featured such characters as the Headhunter, Adam, Barbara, the Smoking Man and Beetlejuice, not to mention mini-PVC figurines which also incorporated the Sandworm and Head Shrieker.





Tons of new Halloween merchandise was released prior to the holiday, and HorrorHound struggled for weeks to hunt down as much of it as possible to present right here in print! Paper Magic Group unleashed plenty of new product, some of the most interesting included a Herbie Leder latex mask and a replica "muzzle." Two foam-filled latex figures (or table displays) from *Saw* were released based on the killer, Jigsaw, and his puppet, Billy. Little hanging heads of Billy the puppet and Michael Myers (Halloween) were also available. Local drug-stores received Freddy VS Jason talking animated dolls (similar to last season's Chucky doll). Local grocery outlets in Cincinnati also carried a fun series of horror movie themed generic plates, mugs, and bowls.



Play Texas Hold 'em in style with this playing card deck featuring 52 full-color images of concept art and poster images from the *Saw* franchise - many of which you may have never seen before! Available online at www.houseofmystery-ousssecrets.com for just \$4.95 plus shipping!



New products revealed this issue from Gentle Giant include the Freddy Krueger animated maquette and Gita Ginty's Carnibal Flash Riot statuette.

MEZCO
CINEMA OF FEAR

Last issue we showcased a first-look at the Mezco Cinema of Fear series four, which were on display at the San Diego Comic-Con. This month we are happy to present studio shots of the final prototypes that include Jason Voorhees (as seen in Friday the 13th: Part 3), Freddy Krueger (A Nightmare on Elm Street: Part 3), Leatherface (The Texas Chainsaw Massacre: Part 3) and Debbie "the Roach Girl" (also from "Elm Street 4"). Look for this assortment in stores around May/June of 2008. Look for Cinema of Fear series five to be unveiled next February, allowing some time for these figures to hit stores! From the upcoming Friday the 13th remake, also look for a 12" version of Jason Voorhees to hit stores in conjunction with series four.

MOEBIUS

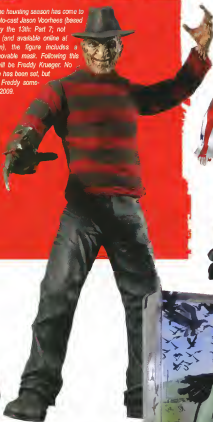
After four decades of "banishment," Aurora Plastics Corporation's infamous Monster Scenes model kits are making their return to retail shelves thanks to Moebius Models. The once controversial plastic assembly kits were dubbed "Torture Toys" and are being re-released in collaboration with trademark holder Danco. Moebius's Monster Scenes kits will be available in their original form and format: 1/13th scaled plastic snap-together models (no dangerous glue fumes, kiddies) and feature extra arms, legs, and assorted ghoulish accessories. The series includes the hunch-backed medical miscreant, Dr. Dredley, his unwitting and scantily clad female Victim, the Giant Insect, and a dungeon full of diabolical restraining devices, including the Hanging Cage and the Pendulum.

Accessories are always important and Cinema of Fear series four has some waiting ones in store! Debbie of what's shown here - Jason comes with a pitchfork, harpoon gun, chainsaw covered arm, and an alternate head! Freddy comes with a pizza (with faces) and an alternate head! Debbie comes with severed arms and a trash model box, while Leatherface has his trademark "speak and spell," and his back-up discreet saw!





Hitting stores soon after the hunting season has come to a close is Mezco Toys' 12" robo-cast Jason Voorhees (based on his appearance in Friday the 13th: Part 7, not shown). Priced at \$39.99 (and available online at www.sideshowtoy.com), the figure includes a machete and removable mask. Following this release will be Freddy Krueger. No release date has been set, but look for Freddy sometime in 2009.



The Captain Spaulking Living Dead Doll. In stores this fall.



Part of the fun being a horror fan is the little surprises you find every now and then. Literally hours before this issue went to press, while at a random visit to a local Target store, this little gem was uncovered. Mattel's Barbie collector dolls have given homage to Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* in this amazingly detailed piece, complete with plastic birds. Based off Tippi Hedren's look from the film, the limited edition doll celebrates 45 years of *The Birds* and carries a suggested retail price of \$44.99. This isn't the first time Barbie met with the world of the macabre, as both *The Addams Family* and *The Munsters* TV families have been immortalized as plastic dolls, not to mention characters from *The Phantom of the Opera* (Broadway) and Faye Whaley in a *King Kong* tribute just five years ago!



Did You Know? Mezco Toys also offered a Living Dead Doll two-pack (as a Hot Topic Exclusive) featuring Otis and a putrid Cheerleader (from *House of 1000 Corpses*)!

DARK NIGHT OF THE SCARECROW

THE STORY BEHIND THIS MADE-FOR-TV CLASSIC AND ITS LONG JOURNEY TO DVD!

BY AARON CROWELL

There's other justice in this world, besides the law. Which has proved true as it took those lawbreaking DVD bootleggers to keep this little gem of a film from all but slipping into obscurity. Centennial, this is how a time-less classic such as *Dark Night of the Scarecrow* has been able to remain semi-present and available to fans over the years. The movie could have easily disappeared without a trace, largely due to the absence of a one-sheet movie poster to remind fans of its existence. Very little promotion or advertising material exists as the film had a limited video release in the '80s. Considering "Scarecrow" was produced for television it did not enjoy a theatrical run, thus never enjoying its day in the sun. Carrying that dreaded stigma that no made-for-television movie can be that great, the film lingered in the hearts and minds of those who knew better. Strange forces are at work, however, as news of the lost film coming to DVD was announced just one week after *HorrorHound* went to press with our "Most Wanted Films Not on DVD" article last issue. *Scarecrow* received poor odds of coming to DVD in the next two years, although against those odds and seemingly out of nowhere in 2009, we will finally be treated to a fully restored release of the cult film. Easily one of the most important horror titles to slip through the cracks, "*Dark Night*" was the first movie to utilize a spooky scarecrow character, thus giving birth to an entire inferior sub-genre of cumulative killer scarecrow movies. Much like *Halloween*, this near-bloodless tale is simple and effective at delivering scares with its equally frightening musical score and iconic ghostly scarecrow character.

For those lucky few who were able to catch the film on television back on the 24th of October, 1961, it left a long-lasting impression. The score composed by Glenn Paxson is bone chillingly effective from the first moment the film's title rolls on screen to the closing credits. Directed by Frank De Felitta (Audrey Rose) and championed by writer/creator J.D. Fegelson, the film was a Wizan TV

production, and dominated the ratings war on that dark fall night. It then reaired a few times and began its slow descent into that void of lost socks. Years later, when Beta and VHS gave birth to the video rental market it received a second lease on life, and found a new fan base who had not previously caught it on TV. Tragically, overwhelmed by a tidal wave of new and old horror movies never before seen (now hitting video), it was often overlooked. Receiving a limited release on VHS by Key Video and Platinum Productions, the tapes enjoy a rich afterlife on the collectible market with few found in mint condition. A still sealed copy of the Key Video release has been known to fetch upwards of \$200 to \$300 dollars or more depending on who wants it and how badly. Even the rare TV press kit for the film has been reported to fetch upwards of \$150 on the secondary market, if you can even find one.

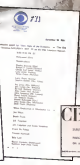
The story plays out like an old wives tale that warns that nature is not bound by any man-made laws, and once those natural laws against innocence are broken, dire consequences are imminent. Marylee Williams (Tonya Crowe) is a little girl who loves to play with her mentally retarded thirty-six-year-old friend Bubba Rittler (Larry Drake).

As they innocently play together in a field, peering through his binoculars, is the officious mail carrier Otis P. Hazelegg (Charles Durning).

Otis hates this special relationship shared between this unorthodox couple, and furthermore, that they are trusted alone together. His friend Harless Hocker (Lane Smith) also shares this issue of distrust and just can't wait to see to it that these two friends are separated, if not permanently. When Marylee ventures, against Bubba's advice, into a beautiful backyard

tinoco-in garden, she is mauld by a vicious dog. Bubba delivers her limp bloody body to her mother uttering, "Bubba didn't do it" (easily the most iconic phrase from the film) as the suspense builds. Harless rushes to the post office to fetch Otis, Skeeter (Robert F. Lyons), Phibby (Claude Earl Jones), and their dogs and guns. It's this angry posse's misinformed belief that Bubba has killed the little girl. With dogs hot on Bubba's trail, they finally come upon an old scarecrow in a field. Once they realize Bubba is hiding in the crude effigy, they raise their guns while we hear the iconic line uttered one last time, "Bubba didn't do it" as shots ring out. It's then after this despicable act that the men are informed on Harless's CB Radio that the little girl is actually alive and well, and thanks to Bubba no less. The men are tried and released from court, being found innocent on a self defense technically stemming from a pitch fork Otis cleverly placed in the scarecrow's hand. Only soon after, the men begin to see the same bullet-ridden scarecrow in their fields as they all later meet with horrible "accidents," or are they?

I think legendary actor Vincent Price summed it up best with his enthusiastic review from an interview in Stanley Water's 1992 book *Dark Visions*. Price is not a fan of modern horror films he reveals, "But one I saw the other night on television with Charles Durning - *The Night of the Scarecrow*? I think it was called - and it was mar-vel-ous! I was terrified, I was on the edge of my seat. Yet it was simple, there was little violence in it at all. It was just this wonderful suspense film, with a kind of 'slur' humor." *Scarecrow* also offers plenty of chills, a scary atmosphere brought on by eerie musical cues and a who-dunnit style plot device that keeps you guessing till the very end. Who's truly responsible for these accidents? The vengeful district attorney,



the little girl Marylee, Bubba's mother, or the spirit of Bubba Ritter himself striking out from beyond the grave from within the confines of the creepy scarecrow?

So why is this cult classic, which is so fondly loved and overlooked, just now coming to DVD? and Blu-Ray? What does a restoration mean in terms of viewing enhancement for this nearly thirty year old missing horror classic? And what is the true story behind this made for TV movie? Learn all this and more in this exclusive first print interview with writer, creator J.D. Feigelson who discusses the overdue DVD release and a little *Dark Night of the Scarecrow* 101:

HorrorHound: How was your script for *Dark Night* chosen for production, and how did you come up with the ideas for the story and then sell the idea to CBS?

J.D. Feigelson: It started out long before CBS was even involved. It goes way back to the point where I made a film called *The Windsplitter* which was a 70s motorcycle Easy Rider type of thing. I made the mistake of trying to get in on that phenomenon too late; Tobe Hooper was in it, Jim Siedow was in it - he plays the father... that's where they met. Jim did a lot of commercials for my company, so that's how I knew him. Anyway, Tobe made a picture called *Eggshells* and both of us were very disappointed with what happened afterwards, and we were talking one day about trying to come up with something real quick and we both had talked about doing a horror movie. We went in separate directions and he ended up coming up with *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, and I came up with *Scarecrow*... he was able to develop his as a feature. My partners and I tried to do it that way, but we just couldn't do it. At the time I was working with an attorney who had connections with Gaylord Entertainment. They optioned it out to California where the head of the company sent it to CBS. They passed on it. Gaylord optioned it again, and resubmitted it to CBS where it was turned down again. I suggested we do it as a feature, but they had lost faith in it. A little time went by and I knew one of the directors of development at CBS, so I called her up... I said, "I can't believe you turned down *Dark Night of the Scarecrow*." I was that egotistical, I thought it was that good. She said the head of production at CBS, "doesn't think it's for us." I said "Has anybody read it?" I had a feeling they just read the one-paragraph cover... and I said I would guess it goes something like this...



Above: The original VHS releases of *Dark Night of the Scarecrow* from both Key Video and Platinum Productions. A foreign-release VHS is also seen below as the film was released around the world by various companies

is that a couple weeks before we aired CBS lost faith in it. Didn't put any advertising money out there. There was a cartoon-like sketch ad in TV Guide for that week, and they ran it as a Halloween movie because they thought it was the spot for it. It took the night. They did a 38 share which is huge - it was roughly 38 million people. They ran it again and again. TBS picked it up many years later and ran it six years in a row as their Halloween movie. Because of that, I did a script and a movie for them. I did *Red Water*, which was at the time the highest rated TV cable movie ever made. That was because *Scarecrow* did so well.

HH: How many days did you have to shoot the film?

JD: We had eighteen days to shoot. Actually, we lost a full day of principal photography because of fires near our location. So really the picture was shot in seventeen days, and still we got all we wanted because of the terrific work of our director Frank De Felitta. There was a day of second unit photography on the sound stage where additional shots were done including the scarecrow coming to life.

HH: Was the film originally written to be made for TV movie, and is this why you avoided the use of gore?

JD: My original intent and script for *Dark Night of the Scarecrow* was to be filmed as an independent feature. Two partners and I had a



Shown above are images from the rare CBS press kit, plus a photograph (middle) of J.D. Feigelson and crew on set of *Dark Night of the Scarecrow*

commercial studio in Houston, Texas and that's where the idea was formed. Unfortunately, we were unable to raise the money, and about the same time the script had been given to a production company in LA. It was taken to CBS as a Movie of the Week. What most people believe is that because of the emphasis on suspense, atmosphere, and scare rather than gore it had been written for TV. Not so. It just happened that it worked for TV and was shot virtually intact.

HH: Tell us about the amazingly creepy score for the film? Did you have final approval on it?

JD: I agree that the score for *Dark Night* is a huge part of the film's atmosphere. I was not involved with the score. It was in the domain of the director Frank De Felitta. He had worked with composer Glenn Paxton before, and assured me that his score would be phenomenal. It was. When I first heard it, I was overjoyed, but it must be attributed to composer Glenn Paxton.

HH: How many scarecrows were used in filming?

JD: There were actually two working scarecrows used in the filming. One was a full-sized straw filled scarecrow. The other was an identical scarecrow suit that a stunt man or actor could get into when needed.

HH: I understand that a scarecrow's head from the film is on display in a museum in Port Arthur, Texas. Is this correct, and can you tell us more about it?

JD: There is a world class museum in Port Arthur, Texas which among other things has a section devoted to area people who have achieved notoriety. Some years ago I was approached to be inducted for my work in Hollywood. Among the items from my career on display is the original full head of the scarecrow. Needless to say it draws attention.



The late, great, Strother Martin (longer actually cast as Otis) poses in front of one of the real sides of the scarecrow.

HH: What is it like to be known as the father of sorts to the killer scarecrow sub-genre?

JD: Funny you ask that. When I first got the idea of doing this picture, I did as much research as I could to see if there had been any scarecrow horror films. I could not find any. Only the Disney series *Dr. Syn* and an episode of *Thriller*. But neither of these really were monsters. It always seemed strange to me that Universal never created a scarecrow with all the monsters they developed. Father of the scarecrow? Why not.

HH: I understand you were in charge of casting for the film. How and where did you discover Larry Drake for the lead role of Bubba, and how did Charles Durning become attached to the film?

JD: Actually, I was not in charge of casting. That was the domain of CBS and the executive producer Joe Wizan. The movie was cast by casting director Lynn Stalmaster. I lobbied for Larry after I had seen him in a student film. I thought he was perfect for the roll and went to bat for him. After seeing the short film, they agreed. Charles Durning's casting was a preference of CBS. Actually, when

I tried earlier to make the movie as an independent feature, I had asked my friend character actor Strother Martin to play Otis. He agreed and in fact worked with me giving lines to Otis that Strother had come up with. Strother passed away before the film was sold to CBS. They recommended Charles Durning, and I agree that he made a terrific but different Otis. Charles is usually seen in jolly roles and it is to his credit as a great actor that he created the sensationally evil and duplicitous role of Otis P. Hazzing.

HH: You built and designed the scarecrow for the film, correct? What influenced you most when coming up with the look?

JD: Yes, I designed the scarecrow. There were minor modifications to him before he was finished. For example, I had put a gnarly nose on him, but later rethought



Above left: The only scene in *Dark Night* where Larry Drake actually wore the scarecrow costume. At right: A early effigy of the scarecrow with a wooden nose which was removed prior to production. More exclusive never-before-seen shots can be viewed below.



and removed it after looking at still tests. The art director at our studio, Bill Griffin, actually rendered the scarecrow effigy from my original sketches. My influences for the look were a wrapped mummy, a medieval executioner's mask, and even a victim's execution hood.

HH: How does *Scarecrow* differ from other horror films and remains timeless?

JD: How does the *Scarecrow* differ from others? Well first of all, I think he differs from other monsters because he's not the monster, Otis P. Hazzarding is. How does he differ from the subsequent plethora of screen scarecrows? He's simple. All the others seem to be very detailed and art directed versions of the Bubba Scarecrow. We decided to make the Bubba Scarecrow as simple as possible since he would have been the thrown together effigy made by a simple farmer, not an art director.



J.D. Feigelson directed two episodes of *The Twilight Zone* in the 1960s. Shown here is J.D. with Rod Serling.

HH: When did you first realize the film had such a dedicated cult following, and feel the need to get the film onto DVD?

JD: Actually, it was the other way around. Executive producer Joe Wizan called me with the information that Warner Bros.' distribution rights had ended. We quickly decided to do a restoration and look at DVD distribution since no one at

the studio had. It was after I had begun the restoration that I began to see the growing interest on the internet. I guess the word of the DVD had leaked out from some of the restoration crew, not that it was a secret. It seems to have swelled over time to something of a tidal wave of interest. I was invited to the recent Fright Night Film Festival in Louisville, and got a first hand confirmation from the fans there. I admit, I'm shocked.

HH: The film is being



Tonya Crowe as Marylee Williams

restored for its DVD and Blu-Ray releases, has the restoration process gone favorably, and what can we expect to see as far as the DVD bonus material is concerned: still gallery, interviews, commentary, deleted scenes, etc?

JD: The film is being restored in the cutting edge Sony HDCAM SR system, and will be available next year on both standard-def DVD and hi-def Blu-ray. At this point, we are eighty-five percent through the process. I hope to finish in late October. So far the fans will be happy to know that the results are astounding. This defining system has pulled out detail and color from the 35mm Panavision film that I have never seen before. As for bonus material, that will be decided in collaboration with the distributor. But for right now, we are anticipating that the commentary track will be a trio of star Charles Durning; director Frank De Felitta; and me, the writer-creator-second unit director and restorer.

HH: Can we hope to see merchandise in the future (statues, shirts, masks, busts) after the DVD hits store shelves?



JD: Yes, all that is being considered.

HH: What is your favorite horror film of all time?

JD: I love so many, but if I were alone in an empty cell, chained to the wall and had only one horror movie to look at, I think it would be the original version of *The Thing*.

HH: You have stated that your film is a morality tale. What lesson can be learned by watching *Scarecrow*?

JD: The theme of *Scarecrow* is the power of innocent love. But the morality of it, certainly is the evil of bigotry and hatred of those who don't fit into societies' molds. Many times in our world seemingly evil people get off not paying the price of their deeds. But do they? As Bubba's mother sagely observes: "...there's other justice in this world besides the law!" 🐾



Larry Drake as Bubba Riter



SPLATTERHOUSE

THE ORIGINAL VIDEO GAME BAD BOY

By Rob Strangman
with Jon St. Pierre
and Derek Dandurand

When someone says video games, most people get a rush of nostalgia as mental images and repetitive tunes flow through their minds, but when you think of horror AND video games, nothing quite touches your inner geek like Namco's *Splatterhouse*. This game, with so many movie references, and a not-too-shabby soundtrack, had two sequels (three if you include the super-deformed Famicom game released in Japan), and is being rebooted in 2009 as the start of an all-new franchise.

The series means a lot to the horror movie community, not only because of its gruesome displays of the macabre in the 2D world, but also for its seemingly endless ties to cult horror movies, with homages to everything from *Zombi 3* to the *The Toxic Avenger*, and from the obscure to the apparent. The most noteworthy homage would be Rick Taylor, the series' hero. On the surface, he looks just like Jason Voorhees, right down to the hockey mask. But Rick is no undead serial killer; he's just an average guy...

According to the instruction manual for the TurboGrafx-16 port of the original, the game takes place in West Mansion, which was owned by a Dr. West, one of the world's most famous parapsychologists. He mysteriously vanished many years before the start of the game, and to this day, no one knows what happened to him. It's rumored, though, that West conducted all sorts of bizarre experiments in the mansion, possibly creating monsters and other abominations. At the start of the game Rick (a parapsychology student) decides to go to the abandoned West Mansion for a school project with his girlfriend Jennifer Wills. On the way there, a thunderstorm arises and the two seek shelter for the night. Without warning a scuffle ensues, and before you know it, Jennifer is kidnapped and Rick is left for dead by the unknown assailants. One thing saves his life: the appearance of the legendary Terror Mask (AKA: the Hell Mask), an ancient artifact which West wrote about in his journals. It possesses Rick, saving his life and giving him great strength. Now Rick must save his girl!

Splatterhouse (1986)

In this classic side-scroller (originally released in arcades in 1986), you play as Rick and must smash, disembowel, or decapitate anything that crosses your path, killing all sorts of foul creatures just to get Jennifer back into your arms. Rick fights monstrosities that could have been ripped



straight out of your favorite obscure and not-so-obscure horror films: shambling zombies called "Deadmen"; a swarm of Boneworms said to have been inspired by 1983's *Deadly Spawn*; crawling dismembered hands that may have been inspired by Ash in Sam Raimi's classic *Evil Dead 2*; a skinless giant of a man with a burlap sack over his head and chainsaws for hands (known only as Biggy Man); and a giant womb called "Mother", which created the monsters fought throughout the levels. Mother's destruction causes West Mansion to go up in flames, with Rick escaping only to battle the final boss, a giant rotting head called Hell Chaos, which is awak-

ened by the energy emitted by the Mask. Following its defeat, the Terror Mask breaks from Rick's face as the credits roll (in the arcade version of the game, the mask is shown to reform and cackle).

But what about Jennifer? Rick finds her at the end of stage five, only to find she has transformed into a demon. She attacks Rick, all the while begging him to kill her. When Rick finally does, her body vanishes as she thanks him, and her spirit soars away. That was the biggest twist in the series, as most other video games of the time featured a happy ending where a "princess" was saved.



The gameplay is one thing that the creators of *Splatterhouse* firmly mastered. It flows fluently with the touch of your controller. It plays as a perfect 2D side-scroller. Much like a gory, updated version of the from classic *Kung-Fu Master*, you must run through the levels, punching and kicking the enemies to reach the end. Running is important, as there's an electric purple mist chasing you that will kill you if you touch it, so you must keep moving. The attacks are kept simple. Punches and kicks are followed by the use of weapons. What kind of weapons? The fun ones, of course: cleavers, axes, shotguns, axes, harpoons... all the horror staples we've come to know and love!

Splatterhouse received a number of ports to various consoles and PCs, the most famous of which is the 1990 NEC PC Engine/TurboGrafx-16 version. The graphics, animations, and sounds, among other things, were out down for this version, but other than that it plays nearly identical to its arcade big brother. One noticeable change made in the TG16 version: the Terror Mask no longer resembles a hockey mask, but is now red with black vertical stripes. It's been suggested that the change was made to avoid a potential copyright infringement lawsuit from Paramount Pictures, the owners of the Friday the 13th franchise at

the time of the game's original release.

The other ports of the game were only released in Japan. There was also a loose adaptation of the game released by Varie in 1988, an LCD handheld game where you must rescue Jennifer from Biggy Man by navigating three floors of West Mansion, avoiding or killing enemies in the process. It's an interesting oddity, but not really worth seeking out unless you're a collector.

Splatterhouse 2 (1992)

In 1992, Namco unleashed a surprise for horror fans everywhere: *Splatterhouse 2* for the Sega Mega Drive/Genesis in Japan, Europe, and the US. It's been three months since the events of the first game. The Terror Mask appears to Rick, telling him to go back to the house; that Jennifer "doesn't have to die" and "You need me." An





stage of the game (at least, its burnt ruins are). They are inhabited by the remaining creatures from the first game, most of which have been hideously burned and twisted.

Splatterhouse 2 is almost a carbon copy of the original, gameplay-wise, with an added password feature. The weapon selection is about as varied as in the original. There's a metal pipe (replacing the original's 2x4), a shotgun, a boat oar, a chainsaw, a zombie head (!), and more. The Mask has been redesigned in this as well. In the Mega Drive version, it looks similar to the Mask Rick wears in the TG16 game, but for the US, and European releases, the Mask was redesigned to look like a grinning skull...

The monsters are a varied bunch, with only a few recycled from the original game. Two of them combine in one amusing sequence: a Boreworm bursts out of a zombie chest in stage one (aka: Alien). The new monsters include flying heads, jumping mutant fish, jumping creatures called Screaming Mims, zombies that can still attack even after being split in two and floating spirit heads that attach themselves to Rick and reverse your controls. The bosses are some of the best ever! There's a giant blob, Deadman Fat, a Freddy Krueger-esque head that's the boss of stage two, zombified remains of Dr. West (called Mueller in the US version) that chucks potassium bombs at you, the giant squid that tears up the dock in one stage then pursues Rick's boat in the finale. There is also the final boss (some kind of giant, multi-headed fleshball) and my personal favorite, the hanging mutant fetuses in what some fans have dubbed "the murder shed" due to the chained corpses and the rivers of blood flowing from them - not to mention the shower of blood that splatters your screen once you kill the "head" creature in the shed.

The graphics are a bit of a mixed bag. While excellent in several places, in other places they just look undetailed and kind of muddy. While Splatterhouse 2 is a solid continuation of the first game and how it played, you can't help but to feel that something vital is missing. But it definitely earns its place in the series and is a must play for fans.

Splatterhouse 3 (1993)

Splatterhouse 2 ended with Rick and Jennifer being reunited, and all at last was well... or was it? As Rick ominously pointed out during the ending, "As long as that Mask remains... it can happen again," and the appearance of the spectre at the very end seemed to indicate just that. Splatterhouse 3 was unleashed upon gamers in Japan and the US in 1993 for the Sega Mega Drive/Genesis (there was no European release this

interesting thing to note is that in the Japanese version of the game, the Mask tells Rick that it's been three months since "the tragedy," Jennifer is in the Land of the Dead, and that Rick must find the "hidden house," not the original West Mansion. West Mansion is actually the first stage of the game.

time). The story picked up several years after the events of Splatterhouse 2, as Rick and Jennifer married and have a son, David (who appears to be about four or five). Rick is now working on Wall Street, and apparently is very good at what he does because he's bought the family their very own mansion in Connecticut.

The Mask talks to Rick throughout the game, acting as a guide to the mansion and a helper of sorts. Jennifer and David have both been taken by the Evil One, although it's later revealed that Jen was taken only to keep Rick busy, as David has psychic abilities and is needed by the Evil One to unlock the powers of the Dark Stone. However, it also turns out that the Mask has an agenda of its own...

Splatterhouse 3 drops the format of the first two games in favor of a best 'em up approach. As such, Rick can do more than just punch and kick. Now he has the ability

to headbutt enemies, do a round-house kick, and more. Each stage of the game takes place on a floor of the mansion (until the later levels), and you can go from room to room, even backtracking if you need. A handy map feature is included that makes navigating each floor a lot easier.

Also new to the series is the addition of a timer. If you don't clear a level before the time expires, something bad happens, depending on which stage you're on. This affects the ending of the game, as there are four possible endings you can get depending on how fast you clear each floor. The most startling example of this is on stage two. If you don't beat the boss before the time is up, Jennifer becomes a "mindless beast," and is lost to you. The picture of Jen you're presented with is truly startling, especially for the time the game was made. Another new addition



to the series is the Power meter. Scattered throughout the levels (and occasionally dropped by dead monsters) are small blue orbs, called Eldritch Orbs. These replenish the Power meter, which is used to transform Rick to Mutant Rick, a muscled monster that makes Rick's already Mask-enhanced physique look like a 56 pound weakling. This gives Rick a new assortment of moves to use... chokeholds, body slams, and one devastating move that causes parts of Rick's body to explode outward, taking out enemies on all sides. New weapons to be had this time around include the underlock and baseball bat. The cleaver makes a return for the first time since SH1, as does the 2x4.

Virtually none of the monsters from the earlier games return in Splatterhouse 3. Instead, Rick has to fight variations of some, like the headless and handless zombies and creatures that look to be descended from SH2's Screaming Mims. New creatures that appear include saw creatures with huge jaws (that drop items when killed), vicious anti-like things, and dog-like creatures that are very easy to defeat, despite showing up later in the game. The bosses are typical for the Splatterhouse series, although a couple do stand out: namely the Giant Boreworm boss of stage two (with its chilling, eerie laugh), the giant teddy bear boss of stage three and the final boss of the game - the Mask itself. There are six stages total to travel through. Four take place within the mansion itself, the fifth takes place in realm of the Evil One, and six is the confrontation with the Mask. There are several bonus stages; you can reach these if you complete each stage within a certain amount of time.

Splatterhouse 3 broke new ground for the





series, with digitized photos used during the cinema displays, some of the best graphics the Genesis has ever seen, and the best design EVER for the Mask; one that's original and represents the evil inherent in it. It's too bad this ended up being the last in the original series, but at least Splatterhouse went out with a bang.

Splatterhouse: Wanpaku Graffiti (1989)

Namco opted to take Splatterhouse and create a version of it for the Nintendo Famicom (known as the Nintendo Entertainment System to the rest of the world) in 1989. Instead of adapting the original arcade game (which would have been interesting), Namco took the super-deformed route and created one of the wackiest, most bizarre games ever released for the Famicom: *Splatterhouse: Wanpaku Graffiti* (Naughty) Graffiti! Since this is a parody, it doesn't fall into the regular Splatterhouse story continuity. That said, the game opens with Jennifer in mourning, kneeling beside a grave. Out of nowhere, lightning strikes the grave and blasts it open, revealing Rick buried there, still wearing the Mask. He wakes up and sees Jennifer, who jumps for joy. Then another lightning bolt strikes the grave immediately to the left, and a bizarre jack-o-lantern apparition, the Pumpkin King, rises into the air, then grabs Jen and flies off. Rick follows it, shaking his fist in rage.

What follows gets downright strange at times. There are all sorts of bizarre things that happen, from the "disco vampire" (an obvious Michael Jackson spoof) in stage one, to the girl who recovers from spiders bursting out of her chest in stage three; there's a lot of stuff that causes simultaneous laughter and head scratching here. Some of the funnier bits include the ability to get soda to refill your life bar out of a machine in the Pumpkin King's lobby, night outside his office/evil altar/place where you fight him. Then there's the girl in the hidden Japanese stage that dances for Rick. If you press the A and B buttons repeatedly, Rick eventually starts farting, and when the girl finishes her dance, she tells him, "Geel! How rude you are! Go home with crystal ball!" Speaking of toilet humor, there's a section in stage seven where Rick can actually enter the restroom and fight little green turds with huge eyes that swarm up from a toilet after an evil plunger sets them free. Then you fight the plunger... I swear, I couldn't make this stuff up if I tried.

Compared to the other Splatterhouse games, there is a distinct lack of weapons in "WG." There's only one other weapon, a shotgun. And the monsters are... well, cute. A lot of monsters return from the original Splatterhouse, just now super-deformed - namely the zombies, the zombie dogs, the crawling hands, and so on. Some other enemies and most of the bosses are parodies of famous horror icons: you'll find spoofs of Regan from *The Exorcist*, Seth Brundle from *The Fly*, Bruce from *Jaws*, the killer from *The Burning*, and a few others. The graphics are some of the best seen on the Famicom up to that point, even featuring parallax scrolling in several places. Everything's bright and colorful, yet still retains a fair amount of the gore that the original had (I love the headless chickens and the hanging zombies).

Once the Pumpkin King has been defeated and Jennifer has been saved, you find out the

surprising thing of all: this was all just a movie being filmed! The director congratulates Rick at the end, complimenting his face acting and telling him how this will be a great film. Rick removes the Mask and leaves after the director does... then the Mask comes to life and starts throwing chairs and lamps around. A movie? Perhaps not. In fact, the hidden ending sequences (which are only viewable by obtaining two hidden crystal balls) show that this was just the beginning for Rick and Jen. But of course, we already knew that.

Splatterhouse Returns: Splatterhouse (2009)

After the release of *Splatterhouse 3*, Namco decided that the series was done. Despite pleas from the fans, no new *Splatterhouse* games were created by Namco - although rumors abounded that there was going to be a new title on (take your pick) the Dreamcast, the PlayStation 2, or the Xbox.

That's not to say that the series was completely forgotten by Namco, though. Cameos by *Splatterhouse* characters and items appeared in several Namco games between 1994 and 2008.

The cover for the June '08 issue of *Electronic Gaming Monthly* triumphantly heralded the return of *Splatterhouse*, after a fifteen year absence from the world of video games. Created by *BottleRocket* Entertainment (creators of the PS2 *Mark of Kri* games) for Namco Bandai, the new *Splatterhouse* is slated for release on the PlayStation 3 and Xbox 360 in 2009. The story is a 3D retelling of the original game, but with new twists: Dr. Vrest is now Rick and Jennifer's professor as well as the antagonist. He sends the "Corrupted" to kidnap Jennifer and kill Rick. Of course, Rick lives and ends up finding the Terror Mask.

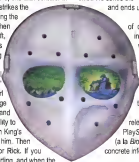
This time around Rick becomes more of an incredible Hulk-type of creature, almost ape-like in appearance. The plot also now involves portals that spawn the creatures appearing across the world. Various sources cite the appearance of killer zombie dogs and Nazi zombies during the course of the game, but have no fear, *BottleRocket* has made it quite clear that they will be keeping as close to the original spirit of the first game as they can. Expect to see fan-favorite boss Biggy Man make a return appearance, along with several of the weapons you loved from the original, such as the 2x4 and shotgun.

Rumor has it that there may also be a 2D "companion game" released as well for download via the Xbox Live Arcade and PlayStation Network. It may be a remake of one of the earlier games (a la *Bionic Commando Rearmed*), but as of this writing there's been no concrete information released about it.

Controversy

As one might expect, *Splatterhouse* has seen its share of controversy. Many rumors surround the arcade game's history, the most persistent of which is that it was banned from arcades across the US due to its subject matter shortly after its release. However, no written documentation has ever surfaced verifying this. Most likely, it's just an urban legend. Upon *Splatterhouse 3*'s release in 1993, it was targeted by Senator Joe Lieberman along with *Midway's Mortal Kombat* and *Sega's Night Trap* in a Violence in Video Games Senate hearing. Strange. *Splatterhouse 3* didn't get as much flack as you might think. It seems that Lieberman was more concerned with going after *Midway* and *Sega* for their digitized depictions of B-movie violence, rather than attacking Namco for their non-digitized monster bashing.

Custom masks seen at left include the Terror Mask as it appears in the original *Splatterhouse* video game as well as the second mask featuring the more skull-like visage seen throughout the *Splatterhouse* sequel. Both masks were sculpted and produced by Shock-Studio.com and can be seen on their website in varying designs, including an updated blood-splattered version.



Peril Unlimited

If there is one thing HorrorHounds can't get enough of it's zombies. They are nasty, putrid, and collectible... well toys of them that is. It's puzzling to think with all the horror merchandise being produced over the years that the undead have only just begun to invade our collections. For the last decade, a smattering of zombie action figures have stumbled onto our shelves, thanks to Resident Evil, House of the Dead, and Mezco's own (now cancelled) Attack Of The Living Dead toy lines. Sideshow Collectibles soon followed suit with their own 1/6th scale series titled *The Dead*, first offered three years back as a San Diego Comic Con Exclusive limited to 500 pieces. Needless to say the units quickly sold out, and now enjoy a hefty price on the secondary market. Thus proving that the living love undead toys. Since that initial release, Sideshow has offered up zombie versions of a doctor, babysitter, and even a mail Santa. Still it just is not enough to satisfy consumers need for less shelf space and more collectible cadavers.

While HorrorHound always tries our best to exhume every new toy company for you the readers, some do slip by periodically. So when we found out Peril Unlimited had been producing 1/6th scale zombie figures for the past two years, we were a bit shocked. Founded by Michael Jones back in 2006, Peril Unlimited has been working hard around the clock to help populate your 1/6th scale horror collection with even more of the dearly departed. In fact, Peril Unlimited is so dedicated to this cause, their figure line is aptly titled *The Zombie Army Builder Program*. Each 12" figure is hand assembled (and painted in most cases), giving fans a unique opportunity to own a one of a kind collectible. If that is not enough, customers can choose from bloody or non-bloody versions of each character; however, each is limited to just 500 pieces, inclusive of both versions. As of press time, only two figures have been made available (Ash and Betty) directly from www.perilunlimited.com. A special limited edition exclusive *Monorville Zombies 12" K-9 Officer* zombie figure is currently available from timesandspace.com. Accessory packs are also in the works. "The Snack Pack" is slated to include gnawed body parts, a gore-filled torso, and possibly a child zombie, while the "Attack Pack" hopes to offer a inventive new bait allowing you to alter your existing zombies and other 1/6 scale figures to become the undead with easy slip on arms and head. "The plan is for them to fit over the figures arms and head, much like a mask you could put on yourself." Michael also revealed, "Depending on budgetary restraints, we also plan on releasing a line of vampires, but we will see what the future holds for now."

Here is your chance to win an exclusive Betty doll with pom-poms - All you have to do is fill out this coupon (photocopies accepted) or write your information down on paper and mail to:

PERIL POM-POM CONTEST!
HorrorHound Magazine
P.O. Box 710
Milford, OH 45150

Contest ends December 10, 2008

Contest rules: One entry per household. U.S. Residents only. All entries must be received at the HorrorHound office by December 10th, 2008. Good luck.

I have always liked to believe that every HorrorHound (like myself) shared a common love for all of cinema's monsters and madmen. Put simply: the more monsters and maniacs the better in my opinion. Sadly, I was wrong to assume everyone shared this affinity.

The older generation of monster kids, for instance, grew up on a steady diet of Universal Monsters like Dracula, Wolf Man, Frankenstein's Monster, and the Mummy. Many of them today choose not to embrace the modern icons of the slasher sub-genre for various reasons. Their unwavering dedication to the golden age of the Famous Monsters of Filmland is unquestioned and perfectly understandable, but sadly somewhat close minded. Before you jump online to send me hate mail - hear me out. Today's youth questions how the Frankenstein Monster or the Mummy were ever viewed as scary or cool. This younger generation often consider viewings of these

classic black and white monster movies as intolerable snooze-fests.

The Universal Monsters presented a more pure and simple form of dramatic entertainment. On the other hand, the slasher's primary function was that of cheap, quick scares, large body counts and gory death scenes. Both genres acting as excellent first date film fodder and a place for teens to howl at the on-screen thrills and shenanigans.

Those of us born during the late end of the baby boom, often considered "Generation X" enjoyed the classic Universal Monsters and early sci-fi invaders from space first on our television sets in black and white, Technicolor, and even 3D throughout the 70s. These early monsters and alien creatures helped shape our young imaginations, giving us the creeps, but they rarely stole a night of precious sleep.

All this changed for "Gen-X"ers in the early '80s when the slasher sub-genre's gory horror films assaulted theaters, drive-ins, and even our very own homes. It was



Count Dracula & Freddy Krueger

This demonic duo possibly share more in common than any of the other icons paired in this article. Having both made deals with the devil, they return to our world cursed to feed on mankind and continue carrying out the devil's bidding. Charismatic and suave, they both remain the most vocal and best dressed of the horror headliners. Taking great pride in conversing, mocking, and taunting their victims, if only briefly, they deliver some of the most memorable quotes and one-liners in horror movie history. They share a common need for sustenance, with Dracula's never ending thirst for blood and Freddy's existence fueled by a need for human souls and fear itself. They both dispatch and drain their victims during the dark evening hours; creatures of the night, armed with their sharp trademark instruments of death (Dracula's canine fangs and Mr. Krueger's razor sharp glove). Attacking their prey in a dream or a dream like trance, they often shape shift to confuse and earn the trust of their victims. Hiding and sleeping in the lower reaches of a castle dungeon or a filthy boiler room, they find some solace. Not easily destroyed having both been reduced to ash and bone only to return to feed on the living over and over again. They have also battled their cinematic brethren, Frankenstein's Monster and Jason Voorhees in crossover films. Dracula gave birth to the flourishing vampire subgenre of film, while



Freddy is hailed as one of the most memorable pop icons of the '80s. Both are truly immortal.

Frankenstein's Monster & Jason Voorhees

The best word to describe these icons is tragic. Both having had the misfortune of being reanimated via lightning, they have no choice but to live out a cursed existence (Don't forget Jason was alive until Part 4, only to return as the living dead in Part 6). Both lumbering giants harm those they feel responsible for their current disposition and/or those who seek to do them harm. While Jason did seem to be a bit more gleeful with his activities in the earlier films, he did take on a more Frankenstein's Monster visage and persona after the release of Freddy VS Jason. Both wear tattered jackets, torn layered clothing, and platform boots. Their hideous facial distortions indicate displeasure, disgust, and pain, forcing one to hide his face (behind a hockey mask) with the other simply hiding in general. The two display a gentle nature and good intentions toward children, well except for that mishap with the little girl and the flower, but I digress since the monster did seem to feel bad about it. These undead creatures also seem to share a dislike for natural elements such as fire and water. Slaves, they do the bidding of their creators (Doctor Frankenstein and

a terrifying time to be coming of age, and the evolving horror genre did not make it any easier. For the subsequent years of puberty and prepubescence, many of us learned to fear and respect movie maniacs the boogeyman Michael Myers, Jason Voorhees, dream demon Freddy Krueger, Leatherface and the continued cannibalistic escapades of his family. Sure, these films began to push the envelope showcasing an ever-growing need for more blood, nuddy and over-the-top set pieces, but that is what was needed to scare and entertain a increasingly sophisticated generation of cinephiles. The trend continues to this day with new Icons Jigsaw and his creepy puppet Billy, the Creeper from *Jaspers Creepers* and *The Devil's Rejects*, who continue the break new ground.

Nearly every Universal Monster has been given multiple face lifts and reintroduced several times over to nearly every generation with mixed success. The iconic slash-

ers, however, have been recently receiving their updated look and attitudes for a even younger 'Generation Y' in this new millennium. Freddy and 'Elm Street' quietly away there re-imagining as Jason is set for his big screen rebirth in just a few months. Michael Myers returned home to a warm welcome from a new generation of HorrorHounds thanks to Mr. Zombie's remake, while Leatherface's new visage and history is well established with two films under his apron already.

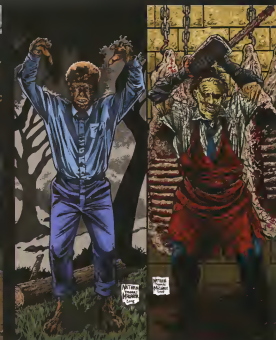
So I got to thinking, what is really so different about our beloved slasher icons and the classic Universal Monsters? True, their films differ greatly, but do the icons themselves? Here is a fun look at what I discovered and while I like to think this could finally put a decades-old debate to rest, I will simply settle for the opening of just a few minds.



Ms. Voorhees) even if one "commands" from beyond the grave. Both successfully continue to dominate every level of collectible merchandise available: comic books, action figures, masks, models, etc... proving they will always remain the most merchandiseable and most iconic of this group.

The Mummy & Michael Myers

Finally freed from the tomb and mental institution, our pair return to the world of the living, if only to spread fear and death. They lurk in the shadows and are driven by ominous yet mysterious forces. These machine-like killers have but one murderous mission in mind. Silent, effective, patient, and unstoppable; they will not be denied. Their rotting faces show no sign of human emotion, while their dark penetrating eyes remain sharp and fixed. Using super human strength, their hands act as effective tools in choking the life from their victims. Standing arm hung in the air, the Mummy's head remains tilted slightly toward his shoulder, while Michael stands, kitchen knife high at his side, tilting his head only after a fresh kill. Both have lasted the test of time, and are as popular today as they were upon their first inception. *The Mummy 3* and Rob Zombie's Halloween remake both scored big at the box office; a true testament to this fact. The Mummy is long considered the first real undead cin-



ematic zombie. While the Shape is hailed as the first true slasher movie maniac. Their facial facade and cold dead eyes have inspired true fear in the masses for decades - a trend that shows no sign of slowing in the near future.

The Wolf Man & Leatherface

Mental illness has always been closely linked to Lycanthropy or werewolfism. No better statement can be applied in describing these two ill-fated character's similarities. Lawrence Stewart Talbot is also known as the Wolf Man, Thomas Hewitt is also known as Leatherface. Both living double lives, they become beasts at a moment's notice; able to kill and devour their prey. Ripping and shredding through flesh with their weapons of mass destruction (Wolf Man's fangs and claws or the teeth of Mr. Hewitt's trusty chainsaw)... none of their victims have a prayer. Carnivores, each eat what he kill; always willing to give chase, often hunting and running down their victims with great ferocity. Far from immortal, they can be killed, although it will take sliver for one. The Wolf Man remains the most openly violent and terrifyingly fast of the Universal fab four, while Leatherface is easily the most overtly brutal and savage killer of the modern iconic slasher genus.

A HORRORHOUND RETROSPECTIVE: THE EXORCIST

35 YEARS OF THE SCARIEST MOVIE EVER MADE!

Every year some magazine or website somewhere in the world compiles a list of what they or their readers consider to be the scariest movies ever created – and every year these lists tend to have a common trend, the same winner. For the best part of thirty-five years William Friedkin's *The Exorcist* has enthralled audiences to the point of frenzy, instilling the belief that the forces of darkness are at play in our modern world, and that the devil can get you – and your children – anytime he wants.

For thousands of eager patrons in the United States, the phenomenon began back on December 26th, 1973. Pre-release hype surrounding the movie's intense content was more than enough to start mile-long lines outside the twenty-five theaters it opened in, raking in an amazing \$94,000 in its first weekend. Reports of people fainting and vomiting during screenings did nothing to bolster the film's box office performance, which to date (and adjusted for inflation) remains not only Warner Bros' most successful movie, but the highest grossing R rated movie of all time.

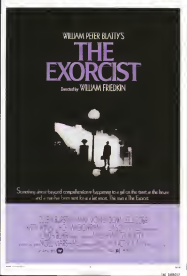
Adapted from the best selling novel by William Peter Blatty and spawning no less than three sequels (four, if you count both cuts of the 2004 prequel), *The Exorcist*'s reputation as "the movie that scared the crap out of my parents" has allowed the movie to transcend three decades as one of horror's most marketable and beloved creations; but what is it about the film that speaks to people?

Perhaps, it is the documentary reality and the modern day setting of the film that leaves us with a sense of invasion. Or maybe, it forces us to think about our own lives and question our own belief system. Whatever it is that sets *The Exorcist* apart from your average scary movie, it's still very much apparent today.

In the late 1960s, writer William Peter Blatty appeared on the Groucho Marx hosted game show *You Bet Your Life*. Blatty walked away from that show with \$10,000 dollars in winnings – when asked what he would do with the money, the unemployed scribe of such comedy screenplays as *A Shot In The Dark* (1964) and *Promise Her Anything* (1965) uttered, "I think I'm going to take some time out and write a novel." What nobody knew was that Blatty's idea would be a far cry from the force he was so frequently employed to pen, but rather a tale of terror that would capture the imagination of the entire world – a tale that was inspired by a true story.

On August 20th 1949, while a student at Georgetown University, Blatty came

across a newspaper article in the *Washington Post*. The article was a brief outline of a so-called case of demonic possession that was taking place in nearby Mount Rainier, Maryland. The possessed was



The original 1973 *The Exorcist* US one-sheet

By Paul Davis

a fourteen-year-old boy named Robbie Mannheim (for John Hoffman depending on your source), who lived with his family at 3210 Bunker Hill Road, Mount Rainier, Maryland. It is said by Thomas B. Allen, author of the 1993 book *Possessed*, that Robbie had a good relationship with his aunt who was a self-professed medium, and that they regularly used an Ouija board together to contact spirits on the other side. On January 15th 1949, unexplainable events, such as footsteps in the walls, strange wrapping sounds, and drums beat plagued the family home, but this was only the beginning. Eleven days later, Robbie's aunt unexpectedly passed away in St. Louis, and Robbie immediately tried contacting her through his Ouija board.

Over the next few weeks Robbie's bedroom was a haven for a series of strange noises, with the young boy himself even starting to manifest unusual and extremely uncharacteristic behavior. As a result, his family sent Robbie to spend the evening at the house of the family's local minister, and what Reverend Luther Miles Schulze witnessed that night would leave him no choice but to recommend a Catholic priest to the family. What started the Reverend was the sight of Robbie's bed violently shaking and the unaided movement of a heavy armchair and the mattress that Robbie slept on.

Between February 27th and March 4th, in the control of Father Hughes, Robbie underwent a series of exorcisms at Georgetown Hospital. As the rituals

progressed, so did Robbie's manifestations. Branding amazingly appeared on the boy's skin; in red welts the words "Saturday," "Louis," and "3 1/2 weeks" randomly scratched themselves onto his body. While the exorcism was taking place, the Mannheim family were conducting their own private seances, and claimed that it was indeed Robbie's aunt who was inhabiting his body.

Further exorcisms would take place throughout March at the home of Robbie's uncle in St. Louis. During the ceremony, more branding and welts appeared on Robbie's back, including the words "Spide" and "Hell." Robbie's behavior also took a turn to the extreme as he started to spit accurately onto the faces of the priests, urine masturbation, and constantly taunt the priests about the sexual relations of priests and nuns.

Having failed to have Robbie put away in a mental asylum for good, he was returned to his home town where he was checked into a secure mental ward for psychiatric observation. The revelation that Robbie had been spouting phrases in Latin (a language he had no knowledge of) brought Father Bishop and Father Bowden back to the young boy's bedside to continue with the exorcism. It was on Easter Sunday when one of Robbie's most brutal attacks on the priests took place; it is said that the word "Exit" appeared on Robbie's chest, with an arrow pointing down to his penis. When this had fully formed, Robbie threw a powerful blow to Father Bowden's genitals. Father Bishop accounted that during the Easter exorcism





Robbie spoke 'the voice of the devil' and that the boy's physical appearance had become evil.

It was not until the 18th of April, during the thirtieth rite of exorcism, that Robbie reportedly jumped to his feet and yelled, "Satan! Satan! I am Saint Michael, and I command you, Satan, and other evil spirits, to leave this body, in the name of Dominus. Immediately! Now! Now! Now!" What followed was Robbie's most violent spasm yet - until the disturbance then suddenly stopped. He looked up at the priests and said, "He's gone." The case of possession not only interested William Peter

Blatty, but also exalted him. For a young man who had considered entering the priesthood, the story was profound, for if it could prove that evil spirits and devils existed, it was possible that angels and perhaps God as a spiritual being were also a reality.

It was some twenty years after that Blatty was reminded of the possession, and with the demand for farcical comedy rapidly decreasing, Blatty had the idea of writing a non-fiction piece on the Maryland exorcism. Contacting Father Bowden, Blatty was presented with the aging priest's private diary of the 1949 case. Despite the fact that Father Bowden felt that Blatty's intentions were to authenticate the power of evil in today's world, he was ultimately refused permission to retell the story out of respect for the family involved. Back to square one, the writer decided to make it a fictional account inspired by the events that took place in Maryland.



Before anything was written, Blatty turned to his high school English teacher and good friend Father Thomas Bemingham to act as a technical adviser on the project and make sure that the story was as authentic as it can be in all areas. Both men conducted extensive research in both medical practice and the supernatural for just under a year before Blatty started work on *The Exorcist*.

William Peter Blatty's story centered on actress and mother Chris MacNeil, who lives with her daughter Regan in a town house in the Georgetown section of Washington D.C. Through the apparent use of an Ouija board, Regan becomes possessed, and is soon spewing obscenities and displaying extreme bouts of

"NOTHING
SCARES ME!
I'VE SEEN
THE
EXORCIST"

behavior beyond her character. In between those fits of shocking behavior, every medical specialist imaginable examines her. Still Regan's possession progresses, she vomits green bile, spins her head in a 180-degree turn, and later appears as a bolt-covered demon. Rapidly running out of options, Chris finally turns to a burdened Jesuit priest, Father Damien Karras in the hopes of conducting the archaic ritual of exorcism and saving her daughter from the grip of evil.

Harper & Row published *The Exorcist* in the summer of 1971, and in the first four weeks of sales it was rapidly dropping to decline. It was not until a last minute guest cancellation on America's premier chat show, *The Dave Cavett Show*, that Blatty was given a forty-minute promotional spot to bring the novel to the attention of the American public. As if by miracle, *The Exorcist* took a phenomenal turn around immediately after the show and became a best-seller overnight.

The Exorcist spent an incredible fifty-four weeks in the top ten of the New York Times Bestsellers List, instantly prompting Hollywood to stand up and take notice of a potential hot property that was up for grabs. First to the table was publicist Paul Monash, who had just produced *Butch Cassidy and The Sundance Kid* for 20th Century Fox. Monash purchased the rights from Blatty on the condition that any impending movie deal would secure the writer a role as the sole producer on the project. With every other studio seemingly unwilling to invest in a tale of demonic possession, Monash was able to convince Warner Bros. to take the movie deal from him for a reported fee in the region of \$641,000. Having already drafted a screenplay from his own novel, Blatty and Monash set out to find a suitable director that could give his story the pragmatic approach that was required.

As the search began, the studio was quick to approach their first two choices to direct *The Exorcist*: Stanley Kubrick, who refused to direct it unless he could produce it in the United Kingdom, and Michael Nichols, who had just signed on to another project. While Paul Monash was trying to convince Blatty that director Mark Rydell would be a suitable candidate to helm the movie, the writer had other ideas having just seen *The French Connection*. Already acquainted with the film's Oscar winning director, William Friedkin, Blatty was convinced that he was the only man who could credibly take his screenplay and create a realistic film about inexplicable events.

When Blatty took the suggestion of Friedkin to Warner Bros. he found out that not only had Paul Monash been negotiating a contract with Mark Rydell to direct the film, he had also been discussing script changes with Warner executives behind the producer's back. Absolutely furious, Blatty threatened legal action against Warner Bros., if they did not fire Paul Monash and remove him from the project. Obliging the producer's wishes, Monash was immediately fired as executive producer and Blatty's agent Noel Marshall was brought in as an associate producer.

Blatty sent a copy of the book to William Friedkin who was halfway through a promotional tour for *The French Connection*. "I was gonna go to dinner with some peo-



Shown on this page: *The Exorcist* French movie poster; a promotional diskette; a US movie poster; an original Japanese press book; and (far left) a complete set of original US lobby cards. Shown directly above is a European quad poster for the VHS release of *The Exorcist*.

THE EXORCIST



ple and while waiting, I opened the book and started to read it. I cancelled the dinner. I stayed in the rest of that night and finished it. And it was, of course, mesmerizing," remembers Friedkin.

Friedkin phoned Blatty the next morning and asked him why he had sent him the book. Blatty told him the background to the story and told him that he was currently planning the movie, and concluded with asking him if he'd direct it. A few days later they met up and Blatty, surprisingly, unveiled a screenplay before Friedkin's eyes. The director was delighted and read it with excitement. When he had finally finished reading, he told Blatty that it was not a faithful

adaptation of the novel and would be too long

to shoot – clocking in at near four hours long. Both "Bills" then re-wrote the script together by marking passages of the book that were important to the overall structure of the story – discarding many of the red herrings and subplots surrounding the housekeepers Klat, Willie, and their junkie daughter Elvira.

Blatty and Friedkin had their own individual ideas for actresses to play the role of the mother, Chris MacNeil, in the movie. Friedkin first approached Audrey Hepburn, at Warner Bros's request, who would only agree to do it if they changed the location to Rome. Next in line was Blatty's first choice, Shirley MacLaine, who was too busy working, ironically enough, on *The Possession* of Joel Delaney.

Added to the list was Jane Fonda, who turned it down flat stating, "Why would any studio want to make this capitalist rip-off bullshit?" Warner Bros. put forth another suggestion in Anne Bancroft, however, she was too pregnant at the time to play the part. Blatty was rapidly running out of options until the studio received a phone call out of the blue from actress Ellen Burstyn. She never had a starring role previously, but coming off the back of an Academy Award nomination for *The Last Picture Show*, Friedkin gave her the benefit of the doubt and met with her. Friedkin drove out to her house in the Hollywood hills and she went on to tell him that it was fate that she would play the role of Chris MacNeil. Despite finding her interesting, Friedkin left her house feeling that he wouldn't cast her. However, later that night, the director had a change of heart and offered her the part.

The role of the aging exorcist, Father Lankester Merrin, was decided almost instantaneously once Friedkin had seen a photo of the French Catholic priest, Teilhard de Chardin, (the priest of whom Merrin was based) who looked exactly like Swedish actor and Ingmar Bergman regular Max Von Sydow. Upon meeting with the actor, Friedkin showed Von Sydow the photo of the French priest and told him that they were going to turn the forty-four-year-old into a man in his late sixties through the make-up wizardry of *The Godfather* make-up artist: Dick Smith. Always one to rise to a challenge, Von Sydow signed on as Father Merrin.

Casting the Jesuit priest Damien Karras brought director William Friedkin and William Peter Blatty to their first of many alterations that would take place while making *The Exorcist*. Friedkin initially wanted to turn to his lead actor in *The French Connection*, Gene Hackman, but Blatty felt that Marlon Brando would be able to give the character the integrity he had in the novel, while also acting as a box office draw. Friedkin rejected Brando flat because of worries that he'd take over the film, and Blatty didn't want Gene Hackman because he didn't think he had the dramatic range to play a care-worn priest. With a week-long argument going absolutely no where, Friedkin brought another name to the table after seeing the Pulitzer Prize winning play *The Championship Season*. Jason Miller was a playwright who also starred in

the play, and despite not having any on camera acting experience, Friedkin felt that Miller had an intensity to his nature that was perfect for the character of Karras. After a short audition both Friedkin and Blatty agreed that they had found their man, and offered Miller the role of Father Damien Karras.

The biggest challenge was the casting of the twelve-year-old girl who is possessed by the devil, Regan MacNeil. At first, Blatty felt that they would have to cast a twenty-five-year-old midget because of the film's content, but Friedkin was determined to give this film a certain realism that demanded the casting of an actual twelve-year-old. Friedkin decided that he'd only get the perfect actress for Regan if both child and parent had their own understanding and interpretation of the theme and story. He went on to interview hundreds of girls for the part with very few of them being invited for call backs.

"Let me tell you a story about one of the girls I auditioned," Friedkin revealed. "She was a really cute nine-year-old who seemed quite 'hip.' She sat down in my office and began to talk. I asked her if she'd read *The Exorcist*, and she quickly responded that she had not, but assured me she knew the story. I asked her to give me her interpretation. She matter-of-factly replied, 'It's the story of a little girl who gets possessed by a devil and does a bunch of bad things.' I said, 'What kind of bad things?', and she said, 'Well, the girl masturbates with a crucifix.' I asked if she knew what it meant and she sighed, 'Sure.' I must admit that I was somewhat taken aback, but I looked at her and asked, 'Do you do that?' She looked at me, paused for a moment, and said, 'Doesn't everyone?'"

After a four-month duration, Friedkin was down to twelve girls that he still wasn't confident about and admitted to Blatty that maybe they should entertain his initial idea of casting a twenty-five-year-old midget! Then, a young girl by the name of Linda Blair, who was overlooked by her agency, was brought in to audition by her mother.

Linda was a working child model/actress from New York and she immediately astounded Friedkin with a level of maturity and intelligence that he had not seen in any of the other girls that auditioned for the role. After a lengthy interview with both Linda and her mother, Friedkin filmed Linda with Ellen Burstyn on an empty sound stage, acting out the Ouija board scene. The on-camera chemistry between Burstyn and Blair was phenomenal, but while Friedkin was convinced that Linda could play the cute daughter role, would she be able to handle the gratuitous footage of the coin that the character of Regan required? He asked Blair to read some of the demon's dialogue, which was full of obscenities and cursing – something Blair was not to eager to tell her mother about. Her transformation and ability to turn her innocence into the spawn of Satan was everything Friedkin wanted, and with Warner Bros's confidence the director hired Linda Blair to play Regan MacNeil.

Having landed the role that would make her a household name, Blair spent several days in the workshop of Shown above: two press kits for *The Exorcist*'s theatrical release in the US and Europe. Also shown above (and opposite page) are newspaper advertisements from 1973 for *The Exorcist*. At right: the original soundtrack release on vinyl.



make-up artist Dick Smith, where she was subjected to full body casts in preparation for the special effects that would take place in *The Exorcist*. One of Smith's hardest tasks admittedly, was the design of Regan's full demonic appearance. Several different make-up tests were conducted and rejected by Friedkin, stating that Smith's designs were not relating to the descriptions set out in the screenplay. With that said, it was decided that a series of welts and scars would cover Regan's face to suggest self-harming of a different nature during the crucifix masturbation scene.

A Curse by any other name.

A week before shooting began, Blatty and Friedkin had their second and most heated argument; this time it was whether or not Ellen Burstyn should have a limousine meet her at the airport in New York. Friedkin felt it only natural for the star of his film to have her own transport waiting for her, where as Blatty saw no reasoning for it and felt she could get a cab. Friedkin didn't react too well to that comment and blasted that he would rather Blatty fire him than treat his cast like that. Calling the director's bluff Blatty did fire him. After a nervous weekend, Warner Bros. executives explained to Blatty that he had no legal right to fire Friedkin, and on their authority Friedkin returned to the project, the argument was settled and shooting was set to begin on *The Exorcist*.

It was not long after cameras began to roll at the Ceco Studios

at New York's 54th Street on April 14th, 1972 that the well documented "curse" of *The Exorcist* apparently began to transpire. While Friedkin shot exteriors in New York City, newly hired production designer Bill Malley (Friedkin fired the original production designer and set decorator three weeks before principal photography) was hard at work turning the warehouse-like studio into the lush interiors of Chris MacNeil's upmarket Georgetown house. As the set was being built, it is reported that several of the carpenters received minor to mutilating injuries (a gaffer lost a toe), resulting in minor delays to the interiors being completed on schedule. As is par for the course, accidents will happen in a building work environment, nobody however can still offer explanation for a fire that burned part of the set down over a weekend when the studio was closed.

As the production continued further occurrences and tragic accidents/coincidences continued to take place. The day before actor Jason Miller was to play the sequence in which Father Karras is in mourning for his deceased mother, his son Jordan was struck by a motorcycle on a beach and left in critical condition. Jordan Miller made a miraculous recovery several weeks later, but the tears in the sequence between Karras and Father Dyer in the dorm room over



Fordham University in New York, were very much real. Another actor afflicted by family tragedy on his first day of shooting was Max Von Sydow. Just hours after completing the scenes of Father Merrin's arrival at the MacNeil house, Von Sydow received news that his brother had suddenly passed away in their native land of Sweden. While the death of Von Sydow's brother and later the passing of Linda Blair's grandfather were put down to coincidence, the false notion that the film was plagued by fever pitch when two of the actors from *The Exorcist*, Jack MacGowan (Burke Dennings) and Vasiliki Malaros (Karras's mother) passed away almost immediately after completing their roles. With incidents ranging from the roommate of William Peter Blatty's assistant being institutionalized to the death of the gentleman who refrigerated the set of Regan's room, Friedkin asked Blatty's English teacher and technical advisor on the movie, Father Tom Birmingham to exorcise the set with everyone present at the New York studio. Birmingham refused so not to increase apprehension among the cast and crew, but instead gave a small blessing to everyone involved, stating that one and all were mirroring the creativity of God, and that the subject matter did not mean they were doing something wrong.

Rotating heads, levitation & vomit!

One of the major talking points, both when the movie was being made

and when it was in theatres, was the array of special effects set pieces that realized Regan's demonic manifestations. Effects wizard Marcel Vercoutere spent months creating devices to give the appearance of a bed levitating, shaking violently, an earthquake effect of the entire set and most impressively the 360-degree rotation of Regan's head. To craft one of the movie's most startling effects, Vercoutere teamed up with make-up artist Dick Smith to create a life size replica of Linda Blair. Smith's life-like dummy was then delivered to the special effects artist where remote controls were installed in the face and neck to control the head rotation and manipulation of the eyes. To last their joint efforts, Vercoutere and Smith placed the Regan replica in the passenger seat of a New York cab. As they came to traffic lights the driver indicated to Vercoutere, who was hiding on the back seat with the remote controls, that people were looking at the dummy curiously, and on that cue, Vercoutere started spinning the head - much to the shock of those looking on.

Dick Smith and Marcel Vercoutere teamed up on another of the film's most famous special effects, that in which Regan accurately spews green bile onto the face of Father Karras. Smith created a device (worn by Linda Blair's twenty-six-year-old stunt double Eileen Diaz) that would hide flat tubes under the make-up appliance



An assortment of books discussing and dissecting *The Exorcist* phenomenon, including two books from Exorcist writer William Peter Blatty ('I'll Tell You I Remember You' and 'On The Exorcist'). Plus a deluxe screenplay for both *The Exorcist* and *Legion* (Bantam UK)



Shown above is an assortment of VHS, Laserdisc, and DVD releases of *The Exorcist* in its original and 25th Anniversary editions.



THE EXORCIST



The Making of Exorcist II, by Barbara Peleberg (1977)

with a spout placed inside the actress' mouth. Attached to the tubes, which ran behind the bed, was a vat of hot pea soup which was controlled by Marcel Vercoutere. In initial tests the pea soup device was not giving the desired effect that Friedkin wanted; a giant blob rather than a spray. The finished effect consisted of a reaction shot from actor Jason

Miller - in which Marcel Vercoutere was supposed to hit his sweater, but ended up hitting him flush in the face - and two shots of Regan vomiting. The first shot of Regan's projectile was achieved with matted green bile, one of few optical effects in the movie, whereas the second brief shot of Regan gagging and dribbling the vomit was indeed Eileen Dietz wearing Dick Smith's device

To give the effect that the demon was thrashing both Regan and her bed every which way but softly, Vercoutere created three different beds that achieved separated effects depending on the scene. The levitating bed, for example, was simply a lower that was positioned behind the wall where the headboard of Regan's bed was situated. When Friedkin yelled action, Vercoutere and his team would push down on the lever and the bed would rise from its feet. The other two beds incorporated the use of pneumatic devices to make both the bed frame and the mattress shake independently from each other - creating the early effects in the movie of Regan's bed violently shaking while both Chris and Regan are on it.

One of the painstaking effects in the film, in more ways than one, was that of the demon physically slamming Regan back and forth on to her mattress as the doctors arrive at the MacNeil house. "I said to Billy, if I was a demon, I would grab hold of her and I would thrash her. I would let her know!" recalled Vercoutere, "and he said, 'go ahead and do it!'" The effects genius nged Linda Blair to a steel lined back plate that was laced up at the sides to keep Blair strapped in. On Friedkin's cue, Vercoutere (who was situated under the bed with pump handle connected to Blair's back) would thrash Blair up and down on to the mattress as hard as he could, resulting in the lacing coming loose from the plate and crashing into Linda's back every time she was jerked back and forth. The screams and tears of Regan that appear in the final cut of the movie are indeed those of Linda Blair, who is screaming from the pain of her back being brutally damaged by the wayward effect



The original 1977 Exorcist II. The Heretic US one-sheet.

Another member of the cast afflicted by a serious injury on the set of the film was Ellen Burstyn. In the scene in which Regan delivers a devastating blow to Chris MacNeil, Burstyn was to be jerked backwards by Marcel Vercoutere, pulling her to the ground. After several takes Friedkin was not convinced that the force in which she was being pulled was compelling enough, whereas Burstyn felt otherwise. "I said to Billy that the stuntman was pulling me too hard and any harder and I could get hurt," explained the actress. "Billy turned to the stunt guy and said 'ok, ease up on her next time, but as I walked away, I felt them exchange a look.' As it would turn out, Friedkin instructed Vercoutere to pull Burstyn as hard as he could on the next take - and as cameras rolled, Burstyn was yanked clear off her feet, landing thunderously on to her lower back, again this shot was used in the final cut of the film.

Hurricane Billy!

Another subject of controversy that surfaced from the set of The Exorcist was that of the behavior and directing method of William Friedkin. When William Peter Blatty hired the director, he knew of Friedkin's undervaluing personality from first hand experience. In the late 1950s, Friedkin was set to direct a Blatty scripted episode of Gunn - which Friedkin bad mouthed horrendously and ended up losing out to another director. While filming The Exorcist Friedkin's demands for perfection often perplexed his cast and crew, but they knew that questioning



him would see them with a pink slip and a 'see ya.' While Dick Smith was applying the aged make-up to Max Von Sydow, Friedkin demanded that Smith cut Von Sydow's hair shorter. This proved a problem for Smith as the appliance was measured to the actor's hairline, and cutting it would reveal the join between Von Sydow's skin and the appliance. Friedkin did not care and told Smith to cut his hair. "Several days later Billy came back into the workshop and complained that he could see where the appliance was attached," remembered Smith, "and I screamed 'What? You told me to do this!' He then told me to change it again, and I said 'that's it, I quit!' Smith went to see his doctor who explained that the stress of working seven days a week had led the make-up artist to break down. Smith then returned to Friedkin's office the following day with a note from his doctor explaining that he would return to the movie, but needed one day off a week. That said, Friedkin welcomed Dick Smith back to the production and granted his wish of some rest time.

Wanting to get the most authentic and genuine reactions from his 'startled' cast, director Friedkin hid an array of guns throughout the set, that he would fire without warning to get a bona fide response in certain scenes. "That's

really what pissed me off" recalled actor Jason Miller when asked about Friedkin's guns in 1998. "He fired a shotgun about four inches from



At left are two vinyl soundtracks for Exorcist II: The Heretic as well as Laserdisc and DVD releases of the film. Above, a promotional poster for the film



The original 1970 Exorcist III US one-sheet

my head!" I said, "You son of a bitch! How dare you do that! What if you'd been a little bit to the right?" and Billy said, "It's ok, we've got Jack Nicholson waiting in the wings."

Not escaping William Friedkin's wrath was Father William O'Malley who played Karras's best friend Father Dyer in the movie. At the climax of *The Exorcist* when Father Dyer is giving the last rites to Karras after diving down the M Street steps, O'Malley and Miller were on their fifteenth take before Friedkin intervened and explained to Father O'Malley that he was just duplicating the same flat performance in every take. "I said 'Billy I've just given my best friend the last rites fifteen times and it's now two-thirty in the morning,'" explained the priest who still teaches at Fordham University.

That said, Friedkin asked the priest if he trusted him to which O'Malley responded that he did - before another word could be said Friedkin slapped O'Malley flush in the face, ordered the camera to roll and backed out of the shot. In the final cut of the movie, it is clearly seen that Father Dyer's hand is shaking profusely, that being a direct result of Friedkin's strike on the unsuspecting priest.

"How do you go about getting an Exorcism?"

The major set piece of the movie of course, is the exorcism sequence that was shot over sixty days in a refrigerated set built on eight pneumatic wheels. William Friedkin was determined to see breath on the actors to exhibit the icy temperatures that Regan's possession had manifested on

her surroundings. To achieve an arctic effect in the middle of the summer in New York City, Friedkin had the entire room cocooned by giant air conditioners that would bring temperatures down to forty below zero. By the time lights were on and cameras rolled, the crew would have approximately an hour to shoot before the temperature would rise and the set had to be shut down and frozen for another twenty-minutes.

A moment of utter anger from the crew was when Regan had to hear her foul dialogue for the first time. To protect Linda Blair from ridicule, Friedkin made sure that the exorcism room was a closed set, however, none of it seemed to faze the thirteen-year-old actress at all. When asked by Dick Smith how she felt about performing the foul dialogue, she simply replied, "It's not me, it's Regan," an attitude which led to Friedkin casting her in the first place. One person who did take exception to Regan's dialogue, however, was Max Von Sydow. It is said that the first take in the exorcism resulted in Von Sydow completely losing composure the minute Linda spat out an obscenity and calmly asked for two minutes to gather him self.

The release, the reaction, the controversy!

After two-hundred and twenty-four days of principal photography and post production that led right up to three days before its release, *The Exorcist* was unveiled to the world in late December of 1973 to phenomenal box office numbers. Although many people screamed for the movie to be slapped with an X certificate, the MPAA felt there were no sexually explicit scenes or anything that would warrant anything higher than a hard R rating. With the good came the bad, however, as all over the world the movie was picketed by religious activists who flyered outside theatres, warning patrons not to open themselves up to

the forces of darkness. In the United States, evangelist Billy Graham even claimed that there was a power of evil embedded within the very celluloid of the movie - a statement that William Peter Blatty has always resented.

The naysayers did nothing to stop the film-going public from selling out screens, neither did reports of people fainting, vomiting, and even the report of a miscarriage during a performance of the film. In the United Kingdom, many local councils in various towns and boroughs refused to let the movie play in their cinemas, resulting in 'Exorcist Shuttle Buses' being set up by tourist companies, taking patrons to the nearest cinema that was showing the movie. Eventually the film was refused a video rating in the UK, and was banned until 1999 when the movie was finally



The original hardcover and subsequent paperback releases of Legion, also released as Exorcist II

THE EXORCIST ERA:

The Top 5 DVD Releases Spawed By *The Exorcist*

By Tim Bailey



1. *Beyond the Door* (1974)

Probably the best of *The Exorcist* copycat films, it stars Richard Johnson of *Zombie* fame, and has a lot going for it: insurrection by the Devil, head spinning, flying furniture, hanging and slamming doors, possession, overall creepy atmosphere and chilling scenes only *The Exorcist* itself could top. Available only on video, until recently, thanks to Code Red BCI who released a special edition DVD, giving this overlooked cult classic a second chance.



2. *The Erie Midnight Horror Show* (AKA: *The Exorcists*) (1977)

An art restorer becomes possessed by a demon released from a 15th century crucifix, she then must undergo an exorcism to rid herself of the demonic entity. An undervalued movie to say the least. Packed with plenty of SSM, nudity, and fairly good acting thanks to Emanuele Reguera and Gabriela Tini. The only available DVDs are from Alpha Video and Eureka DVD. Both are of low grade and are sadly out. Hopefully this title will be re-released some day, but I wouldn't hold my breath.



3. *Exorcism* (AKA: *Exorcismo*) (1974)

Spanish movie starring the great Paul Naschy, the premise is, Naschy playing a priest must cure a sick woman from deteriorating into a beast. Plenty of satanic orgies and gore throughout. First released by Haraki Films in Spain, and quickly became a cult hit on video. An urban legend is Naschy claims to have written *The Exorcist* even came out, but couldn't find a distributor. Currently available through BCI, Delmas DVD unit.



4. *Exorcism* (1974)

Available thanks to a French company called Eurovide, this film has Jose Franco as a religious warrior hell bent on purifying every one's souls by exorcising them, cutting Satan out of their hearts. A good movie with a lot of TSA and gore. It stars Franco's muse (of course), Lina Roray, and was first released out in the US via Demoniac by Wizard video and later on DVD uncult through Synapse Films. There is also a hardcore version called *Exorcism* that is currently unavailable on DVD.



5. *Abby* (1974) (Magdalena) (1974)

Abby is a blend of *Blasphemy* meets *The Exorcist*, starring Giulio's William Marshall. A rare movie that incorporates African religion and demonic elements. A somewhat weird flick, that actually works. Like *The Exorcist*, the female lead becomes possessed only by a religious artifact this time with the exorcism performed in a bar. The movie is available through Substance, a Canadian label, but the quality is video. Still a worth while watch and fairly uncult.

Magdalena is a German film that cranked up the sleaze factor, to the level of *Jesse Franco*. Directed by Walter Boes, who is famous for his work in the exploitation genre: girl is orphaned and becomes possessed. Feels a lot like *Poltergeist* set with an abundance of nudity and sex. Still a good staple in the 70s *The Exorcist* era. It is the second best found in the double feature DVD set from Substance that, much like *Abby*, suffers from poor video quality and too is uncult.

THE EXORCIST



released uncut on VHS and DVD.

In spite of the incredibly split reaction from the critics and public in general, *The Exorcist* was celebrated with no less than ten Academy Award nominations. Having scored four

Golden Globe wins the previous month, including Best Drama Motion Picture, Best Director, and Best Supporting Actress for Linda Blair, *The Exorcist* lost out on all but two of its Oscar nods - Best Adapted Screenplay and Best Sound.

Exorcist II: The Heretic

Several years after the release of *The Exorcist*, Warner Bros. knew that they had a hot property on their hands and wanted to continue the story of Regan MacNeil and her battles with the ancient demons of the past. With William Peter Blatty refusing to be involved, the writer/producer signed a one time only deal that would allow Warner Bros. to go ahead and make a sequel without him. When initially approached, Linda Blair also had little interest in returning to the role that saw her receive death threats following the release of the first film. After a couple of months, however, she received a script from Warner Bros. and the offer of a starring role alongside Richard Burton, James Earl Jones, Academy Award Winner Louise Fletcher, a returning Max Von Sydow, and the director of *Deliverance*, John Boorman. Blair could not refuse such a line up, and although she refused to wear the demon make-up again (this would be done completely by a double), she signed on to reprise her role as Regan MacNeil in *Exorcist II: The Heretic*.

The story of *Exorcist II* revolved around a priest, Father Lamont (Burton) who is sent to meet with Regan to discover exactly how Father Merrin died four years ago. Worried that Regan's bad dreams are a result of the demon still hanging around her soul, Father Lamont travels to Africa to meet with Kokum (Jones), who as a young boy was also possessed by the very same demon who plagued Regan, and like her, was exorcised by Father Merrin. Returning to New York, where Regan now resides, Lamont discovers that the hypnotist that Regan has been subjected to by dream therapist Dr. Tuskin (Fletcher) has allowed the demon to take control of Regan once again, resulting in yet *ANOTHER* exorcism, of sorts, at Regan's old Georgetown home.

The film was an apparent disaster from initial proceedings. It is reported that the screenplay was re-written no less than three dozen times and on a daily basis. Tensions among the cast and crew were also apparent in what was, at the time, Warner Bros.' most expensive feature. According to those who worked on the movie, Richard Burton's drinking habits increasingly worsened as the shoot progressed - resulting in an inability to perform on some days due to his inebriation. The end result was nothing short of what was expected by Warner Bros. Although it was the only *Exorcist* sequel to turn a profit, the film was literally laughed out of theatres upon its release and was even booed at its own premiere on Hollywood Boulevard! John Boorman tried to salvage the film by pulling it from cinemas three times to re-edit, but nothing he could do would save the movie from critical and commercial embarrassment.



The original 2000 *The Exorcist* re-release US one-sheet.

"We are Legion... We are many!"

On August 1st 1983, William Peter Blatty returned to *The Exorcist* universe with his 'sequel' novel, *Legion*. Set some fifteen years after the events of the first story, Legion returns to Georgetown to catch up with Lt. Kinderman who is investigating a chain of serial murders committed that fit the pattern of a serial killer executed on the night of Regan MacNeil's exorcism - the night that Father Damien Karras made the ultimate sacrifice to save the girl. Although the killer cleverly links frail old women as possible suspects, it is later revealed that the spirit of the 'Germi Killer' possessed the lifeless body of Damien Karras to commit the murders that plague the streets of Georgetown.

Initially William Peter Blatty was reluctant to sell the movie rights to Legion in the fear that it would be treated exactly the same as *Exorcist II*. In the late 1980s production company Morgan Creek approached Blatty with the option to turn Legion into a feature film, at the hope of relaunching *The Exorcist* as a franchise. Blatty agreed to Morgan Creek's offer, but only if he had final say on a director. With Morgan Creek in agreement, Blatty approached John Carpenter to helm the third installment in *The Exorcist* chronicles - only for Carpenter to refuse the offer. Unwilling to trust anybody else with the directorial duties on Legion, Blatty appointed himself as director and cast George C. Scott to fill the role of Lt. Kinderman - played by the late actor Lee J. Cobb in the original movie.

In the role of the Germi Killer was genre favorite Brad Dourf, however, later into the production Morgan Creek felt that Karras's presence should be more that suggested and that a familiar face from the first film could help give the movie some integrity to separate it from the previous sequel. After changing a few dialogue exchanges in the script, Blatty went ahead and brought back actor Jason Miller to reprise his role as the Karras personality inhabited by the Germi Killer.

Although principal photography ran smoothly on Legion, Blatty found himself at wits end after showing the first cut of his movie to Morgan Creek. The production company complained that there was no exorcism in the movie, something that was very much apparent from the screenplay that they had agreed for Blatty to adapt. Stating that it was not an 'Exorcist' movie, but a stand alone title that happened to refer back to the original story, Blatty

found out the hard way that Morgan Creek were intending to market the movie as an *Exorcist* sequel and in fact were changing the title to *Exorcist III*. At Morgan Creek's mercy, Blatty was forced to write, shoot, and add an exorcism to the end of the movie - a sequence which relates to absolutely nothing else that happens in the story. Satisfied with the late addition to the film, Morgan Creek released *Exorcist III* on August 17th, 1990 taking just over \$39 million worldwide. Unhappy with the final cut, William Peter Blatty had expressed for years of his desire to finally revisit *Exorcist III* and release his first cut under the original title of Legion; however, in June 2007 it was revealed by Blatty that Morgan Creek claim to have lost all of the deleted footage from his original cut, squashing the hope of fans the world over of ever see-

Shown on this page: *The Exorcist II: The Heretic*, and DVD release as well as "The Motion You've Never Seen" re-release DVD and a complete anthology DVD box set (at right)



Original US press kit for *The Exorcist III*





ing William Peter Blatty's original vision.

The Version We Never Thought We Would See!

While rumors were running rampant in the mid-1990s regarding a made-for-TV remake of *The Exorcist* starring Peter Fonda as Father Merrin, hopes of a possible director's cut of the original film became a reality when British journalist Mark Kermode uncovered several reels of omitted footage at the Warner Bros.' vault – one of which included a scene that had become legendary among fans of the film, known simply as the 'spider-walk.' In 1986 Kermode revealed the scenes to the world in his BBC produced 88-minute documentary *The Fear Of God: 25-years Of The Exorcist*, in which both William Peter Blatty and William Friedkin discussed with each other their reasoning for both why Friedkin cut the scenes and why Blatty felt they were necessary. Among the scenes that Blatty mourned the loss of included an initial doctor's examination of Regan before the party at the MacNeil house, a theological exchange between Merrin and Karras on the nature of Regan's possession and an alternate ending that clearly indicated that good had triumphed over evil and that everything was resolved. It was not until mid-1999 that Friedkin finally agreed to revisit the movie he had made over twenty-five years before. His only concern was that today's audience would crave more than a few extended dialogue additions to be able to coax them back into theatres to make *The Exorcist* a worldwide hit once again. With that, Blatty had Warner Bros. conduct a more thorough search for remaining footage, at the hope that they could find a more complete version of the creepy spider-walk sequence – and to their surprise, they found a take of the scene that they had completely forgot existed.

Inserting approximately twelve minutes of additional footage to the original 193 minute cut of the movie, plus a few digital enhancements here and there, *The Exorcist: The Version You've Never Seen* opened in theatres in the US on September 22nd, 2000 and became a smash hit all over again, taking an impressive \$8 million dollars on just 564 screens and bringing *The Exorcist*'s total worldwide box office to over \$357 million.

Every Story has a Beginning, or Two...

Following the success of the original movie's reissue by Warner Bros., it was only expected that Morgan Creek (who now owned the intellectual rights to make new *Exorcist* movies) would want to cash in on the renewed

interest in *The Exorcist* franchise. Announced in mid-2001, *Exorcist: The Beginning* would tell the origin story of Father Merrin and his exploits as an archaeologist who comes across a possessed boy in Africa in the 1940s. Signed on to helm the prequel was legendary Prophecy director John Frankenheimer, with Liam Neeson cast as the young incarnation of Merrin – things were looking up for the fourth installment in *The Exorcist* franchise, but like all of the movies that preceded it, problems were on the horizon.



The original 2004 *Exorcist: The Beginning* US one-sheet

Harlin's *Exorcist*: The *Beginning* opened in theatres on August 20th, 2004 to mixed reviews and a lukewarm reception from cinemagoers. In spite of topping the box office on opening weekend, the film failed to make a profit and to date has barely scraped \$78 million back in receipts. In order to help make back some of the money spent on two versions of the same movie, Morgan Creek decided to release Paul Schrader's cut on only 110 screens in the United States, and later on DVD in 2005. Although slightly better received by fans of the series, *Dominion: A Prequel to the Exorcist* did little to remove the bitter taste of *Exorcist: The Beginning* and thus both cuts are often spoken in the same breath as *Exorcist II*.

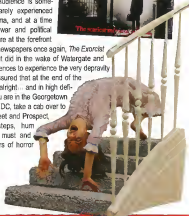
Something Beyond Comprehension...

With *The Exorcist* sure to make its Blu-Ray debut at some point, it is almost certain that the film considered the scariest of all time is set to thrill and terrify a brand new audience all over again. The film's unparalleled power to evoke a genuine emotional response from its audience is something rarely experienced in cinema, and at a time where war and political conflict are at the forefront

of our televisions and newspapers once again, *The Exorcist* has that chance (like it did in the wake of Watergate and Vietnam) to allow audiences to experience the very depravity of evil, only to be reassured that at the end of the day everything will be alright... and in high definition! So next time you are in the Georgetown section of Washington DC, take a cab over to the corner of 36th Street and Prospect, look down those steps, hum Tubular Bells if you must and revel in thirty-five-years of horror movie history! 🖤



Recently NECA Toys have acquired the licensing rights to *The Exorcist*, which has resulted in product ranging from bubble bathers, to action figures (including the Spider-Walk figure shown at right and Regan in bed shown on this issue's cover), T-shirts, calendars, etc...



Fun Fact: Linda Blair continued her *Exorcist* tale in the 1990 spoof, *Repossessed*, in which she plays a house wife who is possessed once again, with a comedic outcome.



NIGHT OWL

ARTIST SPOTLIGHT WITH JUSTIN MABRY



Here's a mask maker that will shock collectors out of a year's growth! Painting eerie green skin, laying black twisted hair, attaching yellow teeth, and painting a highly detailed staring eye, all making him one of the most ghoulish artists to ever create latex masks. Artist Justin Mabry has long been a staple of the mask making community, and *HorrorHound*! His vast knowledge and years of experience can be seen in his wide array of work. Justin's creations can be found in monster kids and slasher fan's collections - including director Rob Zombie himself. In the first two issues of *HorrorHound*, Justin contributed two interviews; one he composed with mask maker Ed Edmunds of Distortions Unlimited and another by friend Alan Mendoza with artist Erich Lubatti in Mr. Mabry's

own segment titled *Monsters & Madmen*. Sadly, the segment had a short life as most of Justin's time was being spent filling a never-ending stream of mask orders (from a dedicated fan base) for his company *Night Owl Productions*. The *NightOwlPro.com*'s forum has become a second home to many mask enthusiasts looking to meet, trade and buy masks from other like minded individuals, as well as purchase Justin's latest offerings. Justin also offered readers a rare chance to win a one-of-a-kind original designed mask entitled "Puckhead" in issue #7. On a personal note, Justin is a very humble and gracious artist and when first approached about being *HorrorHound*'s first featured artist spotlight, he chose rather to shine that spotlight on his idol Ed Edmunds and other mask artist and friends. So it is high time we give him the grand spotlight treatment and learn more about the "Green Ghoul" behind *Night Owl Pro*. As we catch up with him, hot off his first major exhibition at the very first all mask dedicated convention titled *Mask-A-Palooza*, held in Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

HorrorHound: How did you decide on the name *Night Owl Productions* for your company?

Justin Mabry: Well, I've always been a "night owl" - even as child my energy would kick in just around bedtime, and I'd be up all night with my scary movies and comic books. Then in the late '90s, when I first got internet access, I'd stay up all night exploring and researching, drawing and sculpting. When my masks started selling, I had to live two lives - Justin with the day job and Justin the mask maker. Friends would comment on my all-hours lifestyle, and the mask making business became known as *Night Owl Productions*. My creative energy still seems to spike when everyone else's heads are hitting their pillows, so the light stays on in my shop all night long.

HH: How long have you been making masks, and how old were you when you first started?

JM: When shopping for masks dur-

ing my childhood, I was often disappointed when they didn't quite look as real as their characters in the movies, so I began altering hair and paint jobs to make them a little more "real." When I first began sculpting my own props and masks, it was purely trial and error, a lot of patience on my part, and tolerance on my parents' part. I once nearly blew up my microwave trying to bake a finger prop sculpted over a homemade armature of metal pins. I would also take tips from movie and horror magazines, such as *Fangoria*, *Gorilla*, and *Cinemagic* on both mask making and make-up appliances. A favorite was *Famous Monsters of Filmland*'s *Do-It-Yourself Monster Make-Up Handbook* by Dick Smith. As far as mask sculpting, at age thirteen I completed my first

mask sculpting. A guy I'd worked haunted houses with told me he knew how to make molds. I looked up to the guy and thought he knew what he was doing, but watched in horror as he filled a cardboard box with dental plaster and slammed my sculpture face-first into it. As he handed me the crumbled pieces of clay that were my monster, he instructed me to go home and re-sculpt it so he could try again. But I decided to explore other options. So I was thrilled to find on the inside cover of the September 1990 #96 *Fangoria* magazine a full-page black and white *Death Studios* ad with a how-to video on "making masks the *Death Studios* way." I cut yards to make the \$24.95 + \$2.75 shipping and waited by the mailbox. Jeff at *Death Studios* (www.deathstudios.com) will always remain one of my childhood heroes for making this video and being kind enough to share his knowledge, and even taking my calls from time to time when I just couldn't figure something out. This video taught me so much about techniques and materials at a time before the internet's vast expanse of "knowledge at your fingertips." The first successful mask that I sculpted, molded, poured, and painted was at age fifteen in 1993. It resembled *Darkman*, as I couldn't afford the *Alien* *Gen* Factory's version. It was still a few years after that lot of trial and error, patience, and practice before I began selling my masks.

HH: What was the very first mask that you owned, and what happened to it?

JM: I remember very clearly my grandmother taking me after a dentist appointment to a drug-store and letting me pick any mask I wanted. I was about six or seven years old, and I selected a blue Frankenstein. The only monster hands we could find were those green vinyl ones with black fingernails and fur on the back that I ripped off. Not a perfect match, but the costume worked for me. "Mama" actually bought many of my early masks, as she would take me to a local costume rental and sales store called *Jackie's Toys* in Jackson, MS and let me choose for myself birthday pres-

Shown above and at right: various *Night Owl* creations from past and present.



Justin's 5000 BC Mummy mask, as it looks today.



Justin's first custom mask based on *Darkman*.



A custom Michael Myers (Mabry) mask.



ents. She invested in my own creations as well, ordering my first proper sculpting armature from Stage Door which we also found from another ad in *Fangoria* magazine. I don't know what became of that blue Frankenstein; it was probably stolen by one of the neighborhood heathens or lent to a friend and forgotten. The most memorable early mask I owned (and still own) was bought for me in the late 1980s around age eleven. My grandfather took me to Jackie's and bought me the 5000 BC Mummy from Don Post Studios, the glow-in-the-dark version. My grandfather passed away just a few years after that, and I still treasure this gift from him, although it could hardly be considered a mask in its current condition.

HH: Clearly, you like to put your own unique spin on the iconic horror characters you have sculpted over the years. What are some of your favorite monsters and madmen from the horror genre?

JM: I like just about anything horror from before 1990 from Universal Monsters to slashers and zombies. I love classic movie monsters, B-movie monsters, and creatures from outer space. Preferences change with age – as a kid I liked anything scary that came on the TV, then went through my gore-fest stage as most guys my age have done. As I grew, I began to get into more classic monsters. From the dramatic Universal movies to the campy '50s and '60s space monster stuff. Frankenstein probably is my favorite, but I really love all the tortured, misunderstood monsters, whether they were born that way, put together in a laboratory, or crash landed onto our planet.

HH: It is no secret you are a huge fan of retro horror, such as EC Comics and the iconic Shock Monster character. Which aspects of these classic creations most inspire you as an artist?

JM: I like all horror comics, pre and post-comics code, but the EC Comics are the best. Each artist brought their own distinct style, my favorites being Jack Davis, "Ghastly" Graham Ingels, and Al Feldstein. I like the staggering, drippy characters seeking their revenge, stringy saliva in their teeth, and the victims, their eyes wide with fear, getting their just desserts. I could write pages about the EC Comics, but let me get onto the Shock Monster (which I also could write

extensively about!). One of the first monster masks available, other than Frankenstein, it was first released for sale in 1959. Although not featured in comics, the image of the Shock Monster has the overwhelming look of a MONSTER MASK, reminiscent of the EC-style monsters. Designed by Keith Ward and made by Topstone Rubber Mask Company, it was sold in magazine and comic book ads for years. I've sculpted this monster several times, but only molded two versions. One is a modernized version I created with Dave Hartman (www.sideshowmonkey.com) to appeal to today's collectors. The other is classic for people who love the original. I was able to recreate the original Shock Monster so closely because my friend Darrell Vidauri of VOOFX owns the original master copy.

HH: You have done some commission work for special customers. Can you tell us about some of the more interesting projects you have completed for customers? (example: Tommy Pickering's Dead Guy Graves)

JM: My schedule doesn't allow me to do much commission work these days, but I have occasionally done some custom pieces in the past. Tommy Pickering is a good friend and supporter of mine, and actually is the one who first got me involved with *HorrorHound* Magazine when it started a couple of years ago. Tommy is a big Michael Graves fan, so I made the Dead Guy Graves for him and also have made him a Dead Elvis. They were fun, but I stay too busy filling orders to honor many custom order requests.

HH: The www.nightowlpro.com forum has become a second home to many mask enthusiasts. How do you feel about the growth of the internet forum based mask communities, and how do you feel this has impacted the mask collecting hobby?

JM: Although I don't have as much time as I'd like to participate in the forums, I think they're a great way to connect with other collectors. There often aren't a lot of people locally who share this hobby/obsession, so it's great to be able to be a part of these communities. Some of the people I've met on these forums are now very close friends, and I have seen several other friendships formed on the forums. The impact on the hobby is incredible. If you're looking for something, there's a place you can go and someone will have it or know where you can get it. There are over 2,000 members on my forum and I appreciate all of them. I'm glad to be able to provide a place for them to hang out and enjoy masks and monsters.

HH: Name some of your favorite artists and sculptors who have had the biggest

Left and right: two of Justin's Shock Monster creations.



Paint technique samples:





influence on you over the years?

JM: There are so many artists that inspire me - there is no way to mention them

all, so I'll try to stick to the ones who most closely impact my own work. I first want to mention one of my closest friends, Russ Lukich, an effects artist who's worked on the *Hellboy* movies, *Blade 3*, and many others. He has vast technical knowledge when I need it, and is always available to motivate me when I'm struggling or overwhelmed. There are several artists I would like to list: Bruce Spaulding, Fuller, Stan Winston, HR Giger, Steve Johnson, Greg Cannom, Rick Baker, Chris Russell, Kyle Hotz, Jorju Schell, Steve Wang, Norman Cabrera, Chet Zar, Casey Love, Jason Hanks, Chris Bones, of course Ed Edmunds of Distortions and Don Post, Daniel Vidauri, Dick Brierley, Bernie Wrightson, Wally Wood, Mike Hill, Rob Botin, Jeff Death, Carlos Huanli, Simon Bailey, Jim Murray, Glen Fabry, John Bolton, Mike Hoffman, Henry Alvarez, Keith Ward, Pat Newman, Rich Krusell, Jack "King" Kirby, Frank Frazetta, Dick Smith, Joe Riley, Thomas Kuebler, Brom, Eric Pigors, and I never

leave the house without Dave Hartman's *Sideshow Monkey* book (sad but true, ask my wife. Seriously, Dave, I need another copy, this one's falling apart). I know there are so many more, and these really aren't in any order. I spend more time researching and studying than I do actually sculpting, and all these guys are so inspiring to me.

HH: What is your personal favorite sculpt (or mask) you have created and why?

JM: Usually whatever is new and fresh is my favorite because I'm not yet burned out by the production of it. At the moment, the ones topping my list are the original Shock Monster, the Dick Brierley tribute Frankenstein, and the Dave Hartman inspired Nail Mouth. Ask me in a few months and I could have different answers, though.

HH: What part of mask making do you least enjoy?

JM: Not having enough time! I have so many ideas and so many characters in my head I want to bring to life, but I have to stick to



Night Owl's display at the first-ever Maskapalooza event.



JM: Not having enough time! I have so many ideas and so many characters in my head I want to bring to life, but I have to stick to

select pieces that I think will appeal to the most people. I would love to be able to make a living selling all original characters, but movie monster resemblances are always in demand. I don't like making molds, and the production process can be demoralizing a bit - trying to put just as much into the twenty-seventh copy of a mask as I do the first. I don't like to mail out any piece I'm not completely satisfied with, and this sometimes leads to longer wait times than I'd like, but it's most important to me that when you open your Night Owl box the face staring up at you sends shivers down your spine.

HH: Many of your masks showcase some of the most realistic and creepy hand painted eyes. Is there a certain technique you use? Can you share any of your trade secrets with us?

JM: As far as technique, I recommend anyone starting out get a Death Studios mask making video. For my eyes, I use a combination of inks and watercolors with tiny brushes. For a great lead on learning eye-painting techniques, I recommend Movie FX Special Effects Master Class Volumes 1 & 2.

HH: Is there anything you would like to say to the fine folks out there reading this?

JM: Thanks to everyone who has supported me through the years. I feel very grateful to be able to support my family with art and mask making. I've been able to meet many awesome artists and fans, and have made great friends through this business. I encourage everyone reading this to look up all the artists I've referenced in this article. Lastly, I would like to thank my parents and grandparents for encouraging the artist in me from very early on, and my family for their continued love and support. Oh - and everyone PLEASE drive the speed limit and USE TURN SIGNALS! WRECK-LESS DRIVING KILLS! 🚗💥

Shown on this page: various recent Night Owl creations. Shown at left an in-progress shot of a recent Frankenstein creation.



At left is one of those rare surprises which HorrorHound received just prior to last issue's press date. Lunchmeat is a VHS Fantasia that is an impressive (for its subtitled matter) ode to the '80s VHS Boom, to which any reader of HorrorHound can attest - we are fans. This first issue is mostly sold online via eBay and features full-page reviews (or synopses) of the author's favorite VHS "classics," including (but not limited to) *Alien*, *Phobia*, *Mausoleum*, *Demelated*, *Spears*, and *Lunchmeat* (the title of which they borrow their name from). Some oddball articles are thrown in for extra measure (focusing on toys and artwork). It is a fun read for anyone who has interest in lost horror titles, most of which have yet to hit DVD!



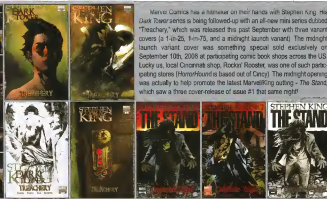
From Jonathan Mabery comes this interesting title in the subgenre of zombie fiction. *Zombie CSU: The Forensics of the Living Dead* includes over 250 interviews with real-world experts in Law Enforcement, Forensic Science, Medicine, Law, Psychology, Military, and Philosophy to present the first ever look at how our real world would react, research, and respond to a zombie uprising. The book features interviews with Max Brooks, Steve Allen, Robert Kirkman, Tony Todd, and dozens more. Clocking in at 402 pages, "Phons" (page 136) is a work you'll read a lot in this book, and if you're like me it'll chill you to the core. Phons are what cause Mad Cow disease and are one or two mutations away from turning people into the living dead. We learn that the police nor our various world medicines are as adept and morose as our movie makes like to portray them. The later half of the book gears up as the author goes into how human beings will undoubtedly fight back against our zombie oppressors. This type of writing is the same sort of talk you and I have with our friends when we come up with our zombie survival plans. It's a fun read and with the stage already set for us via the interviews with all the experts and the chilling prior discussion, we readers can let our minds wander. The book can be picked up at Amazon.com today for just \$11.53 plus shipping. (Review by Michael Jones)



Comics now in stores: the continuation of *Army of Darkness*, *Dracula Meets the Wolf Man*, *Hack/Slash vs. Rip-Animator*, *The Living Coopers*, the first issue of *The Last Boys* nite-series, the new *Halloween* 30 Years of Terror comic (featuring four variant covers), The (annual) *Simpsons' Treehouse of Horror*, and the latest Tales from the *Crypt*. Also available is *The Trap-Door Killer* (a Phantom of the Opera prequel).



Fans display their soon-to-be midnight launch event "Rockin' Rooster!"



Marvel Comics has a hunk on their hands with Stephen King: his *Dark Tower* series is being followed-up with an all-new mini series dubbed "Treasury," which was released this past September with three variant covers (a 1-in-25, 1-in-75, and a midnight launch variant). The midnight launch variant cover was something special sold exclusively on September 10th, 2008 at participating comic book shops across the US. Lucky us, local Cincinnati shop, Rockin' Rooster, was one of such participating stores (HorrorHound is located just off of Cincy). The midnight opening was actually to help promote the latest Marvel/King outing - *The Stand*, which saw a three cover-release of issue #1 that same night!



Let me first warn readers that mondo movies are not for the faint-of-heart, as their inclusion in GoreHound should already indicate. If you have a weak stomach or hard time viewing real images of grotesque autopsies, sickening surgeries, sexual perversions, tragic suicides, violent animal deaths, or other taboo subject matter of the sort you may want to steer clear, and move on. If you are what I like to call a "cinematic explorer" and are looking to earn your mondo merit badge, let us continue...



against life and death. The word *mondo* is the Italian word for "world." These documentaries are also known for staging segments to intensify the over-the-top nature and appeal of their pictures. In most cases life is stranger than fiction, so little has to be added for true enhancement, but some of the titles found within the mondo genre do tend to rely more heavily on staged scenarios in hopes of taking advantage of the glibble. Outrageous, cruel, and often banned, these films have survived the test of time thanks to GoreHounds, the video boom of the '80s, independent DVD companies, and word of mouth. Some titles are even making the leap to the Blu-Ray/DVD format, a move that is quite shocking in itself.

Since the invention of the camera, filmmakers have been consistently documenting every aspect of life and death no matter how strange. Thomas Edison, for instance, filmed the electrocution of *Topey* the elephant on January 4, 1903, who had killed three of its keepers. Demonstrating the dangers of alternating current to discredit Westinghouse, while making a short film of the execution at the same time. Edison's *Electrocuting an Elephant* continues to disturb audiences to this very day where it is just a click away on YouTube. This strange short is possibly the earliest snippet of mondo movie making at its most bizarre. A film released in 1930 titled *Ingagi* followed the expedition of British explorers deep into the Congo in search of a gorilla-worshipping tribe. Plot sound familiar? It should since it was the inspiration for *King Kong*. Tagged as an authentic record of African adventure, the film featured staged scenes mixed with animal stock footage edited cleverly together. While it is not a mondo movie, it did exhibit common elements later found within the genre. It was also a major success in part

thanks to all of its "bad publicity." Seems authorities

were so outraged, shocked, and appalled over the film that it was in some cases banned. In the 1950s, following *Ingagi*'s success, similar themed jungle adventure titles began to spring up. *Bowanga* (AKA: *Wild Women*) and *Forbidden Adventure* both exhibited that early mondo spirit. While harder edged ethnographic style documentaries, such as *Sorcerer's Village*, *Savage Africa*, and *Kwaheri*: *Vanishing Africa* placed a stronger emphasis on violence, blood, and nudity in order to find their core audience. The 1980s gave rise to sex-themed mondo titles. American film maker Russ Meyer released *Mondo Topless* in 1966, a documentary restricted to midnight movie screenings that explored nude clubs in 1960s San Francisco, at a time when strip clubs were restricted to port-city decadence. Another important title was the 1964 *Mondo Balardo*, directed by Roberto Bianchi Montero and narrated by Boris Karloff. However, Italian director Luigi Vanzi and writer Gualtiero Jacopetti's film *Mondo di Notte*, or *World by Night* (1959) was the first to explore everything from ballet to burlesque. The film was a hit and led to the first production to coin the term "mondo" in its title: *Mondo Cane*.

Bold and beautiful weird and wonderful, *Mondo Cane* (AKA: *A Dog's World*) is a joy to behold. The tag line states "All the scenes you will see in this film are true and taken only from life..." If often they are shocking it is because there are many astounding, even unbelievable things in this world. No true words could be spoken to describe the odd unrelated mixture of material found within this 1962 title;





including everything from man-hunting mating rituals in New Guinea, to the strange diets of people in Taipei, and even the tear jerking demise of confused radiated egg laying sea turtles. The film remains elegant and unflinching in its graphic documentation of life and death from seldom seen parts of the world. The film was professionally narrated and shot by Italian directors Gualtiero Jacopetti, and Paolo Cavara with score by Riz Ortolani and Nino Oliviero. In fact the song "Ti Guarderò" Nel Cuore (AKA "More") found

on the soundtrack was nominated for an Oscar for Best Song in 1963, but sadly lost. Considered the first true mondo movie Mondo Cane is responsible for the onslaught of similar (and not so similar) styled pictures that followed in its wake. Jacopetti and fellow director Franco Prosperi continued the series with Mondo Cane 2. This follow-up film seems to share a more cynical viewpoint as it addresses the problematic British censurers and their harsh treatment of the first film. In result, the intro and other segments are dedicated to pointing out immoral practices found in the UK, such as the debarking of lab dogs and pollution resulting in the deaths of rare birds. Stand-out scenes found in this sequel include: a suicidal burning of a Buddhist monk, living bug jewelry, a female slave auction, shark wrestling in Hawaii, and an interesting pulp fiction (or crime noir) novelette photo shoot. Both Mondo Cane films are considered light hearted in their choice of disturbing footage only straying into the extreme long enough to shock and keep viewers guessing what insane images will assault them next. Gualtiero Jacopetti and Franco Prosperi continued to release more shockumentaries over the years including the more violent and bloody *Africa Addio* (AKA: *Africa Blood and Guts*), *La Donna nel mondo* (AKA: *Women of the World*), and the politically incorrect *Addio zio Tom* (AKA: *Goodbye Uncle Tom*). All these titles are currently available on DVD from Blue-Underground.com. Mondo Cane 3 and 4 were released, but by other directors, hoping to capitalize on the sensational title's name and success with extreme modern themed content.

Nearly ten years after the sequel to Mondo Cane came and went, a German documentary (directed and written by Rolf Olsen) titled *Shocking Asia* hit the scene hard. This film was far more explicit than the previous mondo films from the genre. Exposing Asia's seedy underground culture that includes: Japanese animal cuisine, extreme piercing in India, and a Singapore sex exchange operation

(sure to make you vomit). The bulk of the content found in the film is of a more sexual nature with some meandering and lots of animal death. Offering more bang for your buck (no pun intended), the picture packs a good amount of graphic footage into its run time of 94 minutes. Sadly it is in dire need of remastering, with poor picture

quality and distorted audio even for DVD. A sequel was released ten years later titled *Shocking Asia II: The Last Taboos*, again directed by Rolf Olsen. Still shocking, the picture regurgitates previously seen stock footage to fill its run time. Both titles can be found on DVD thanks to Substance.

Then in 1978, a movie revived and altered the mondo genre and cinema forever. That film was *Faces of Death* (AKA: *The Original Faces of Death*) and gave instant birth to the "death film" mondo subgenre. The film was co-written by John Alan Schwartz, directed by Conan Le Claire (clearly a pseudonym, as the original director remains anonymous to this day) and narrated by the late Michael Carr (AKA: Dr. Francis B. Gross), with an effective score by Gene Kauer. Produced by Japanese investors who wanted a hard core documentary about death, "Faces" was never meant for the western world. It did enjoy a limited US theatrical run and a much wider release in Japan. The film even went on to out-gross *Star Wars* in the "Land of the Rising Sun." Slapped with the label "Banned in 48 Countries," although the number is much lower today, this only seemed to help fuel the fire and the film's forbidden reputation. Discussed in whispers and rumored to be a

"real" snuff film or at least as close as you were going to get. The film acted as that horrible highway accident with the mutilated body under the semi tire, only it was paused and zoomed in. Everything is on full gory display including real stock footage of accidents, suicides, slaughterhouse scenes (from a less humane time), post mortem, and decomposing corpses. It is true nearly half of the scenes in the film are clearly staged, such as the alligator attack, electrocution, monkey brain munching, and closing hippie cannibal cult sequence, which is nothing new to the mondo genre. However, *Faces* was a huge success on VHS during the video boom of the '80s where it truly found

its audience, thanks to Gorgon Video. If you rented the title in the original box cover, it was commonly individually wrapped in a brown paper or black plastic bag (much like liquor or porn) to conceal the title from passing eyes. Reports of the film being rented to minors also was cited as a reason for the film's unique rental treatment upon exit. For those of us who wanted to see it all, *Faces* gave us plenty and worse, since you did not know what to expect going in. Once one had reached that "point of no return" it was far too late to turn back, as the horrible images became embedded in your psyche. To say *Faces of Death* is an entertaining viewing experience is like saying funerals can be fun. Upon the completion of a first-time viewing, most people experience extreme feelings of depression, emptiness, and most of all regret. Do not feel bad, this means you are normal. *Faces* still acts as a right of passage for many horror fans who have the stomach for it, and many who don't.

What started as a single Japanese backed film became a thriving American film series. In *Faces of Death 2*, the filmmakers had learned their lesson and only staged one scene filling the remaining time with even more sickening stock footage. Still just as revolting, the sequel seemed a bit weaker in terms of con-



WHEN THE DIGITAL REALITY OF DEATH DENIES THE IMAGINATION FACES



alent and production quality, sadly, this trend continued throughout the remaining run of the series. Between the releases of Parts 3 and 4, *The Worst of Faces of Death* was compiled and released in 1987. This allowed Gorgon to continue capitalizing on the video rental success of the first three films and the never ending buzz surrounding the morbid series. A lawsuit did force "Worst" to be pulled from shelves when a young boy who committed suicide was found to own a copy of the movie. This did not last long as the first two films in the series (found in the video box set) 5 and 6 were eventually released (consisting of highlights found in the first four films with no new footage added) to some countries for the first time since originally being banned. Another release composed of the best (or worst) sequences from the official four films was a mockumentary titled *Faces of Death: Fact or Fiction*, released in 1999. Complete with a running interview with the "supposed" infamous

and anonymous director Conan le Claire, whose identity and voice are kept secret, as he reveals the truth behind the scenes that were actually "simulated." The series has since penetrated pop culture and will always remain a pioneer documentary film in the mondo genre that easily is the most successful word-of-mouth title in existence today. It has been mentioned on the *Sopranos* HBO series, was ranked #50 on *Entertainment Weekly's* "Top 50 Cult Films of All-Time" in 2000, and was even spoofed on Conan



O'Brien in a segment titled: *Muppet Faces of Death*. In 2006, it was announced that Rogue Pictures was developing a new version of the film, with director J.T. Petty attached. The plot involved an emotionally desensitized morgue employee who uncovers a horrific truth about the reality behind the *Faces of Death* documentaries and a string of gruesome "accidents." Even more recently, Dark Sky Films released *Faces of Death* Blu-ray disc on October 7, 2008. Complete with brand new high definition transfer created from extremely rare vault materials and 5.1 digital soundtrack, a feature-length documentary with director Conan le Claire, choice cuts with editor Glenn Gurner, a make-up effects featurette, trailers, outtakes and more, *Faces of Death* Gorgon DVD box set, containing Parts 1-4, *Fact or Fiction* and *Worst of...* is still currently available.



ing titles to VHS such as *Executions 1 & 2* and *Violent Shit*. *Traces* is easily the winner for the most disgusting of the *Faces of Death* offspring due to its simplicity and sheer amount of gruesome content. Today these films may seem somewhat tame with internet sites, such as newsoftheweird.com, rotten.com, justack-shit.com, deathindementia.com, and muchiouso.com commanding the latest greatest, grossest, and most up-to-date shocking images and videos currently available. The mondo genre has shed its skin once again and today is considered reality entertainment, seeping into television where mondo-esque shows, such as *When Animals Attack*, *Cops*, and *Real Stories of the Highway Patrol* equal ratings. Not very many notable shockumentaries have emerged over the years with *Banned from Television Uncensored!* being the most shocking, due to the rewind-inducing final scene of a woman being hit by a train. Will the original spirit of mondo re-emerge or simply shed its reality skin and reveal something even more shocking underneath? ☹

Special thanks to Matt Moore and George at Video Mart Inc. Richmond, VA where all the videos featured in this article are still available for rental.



Imitation is the ultimate form of flattery, and in *Faces of Death's* case there was a crop-load of flattery released over the years. Copy cat titles and series, such as *The Many Faces of Death*, *Faces of Gore*, and even *Faces of Death 2000* cashed in on the original picture's title, success, and notoriety. The most popular and self-regarded first true 100% shockumentary was the direct-to-video *Traces of Death* series. "Traces" made no attempt to stage scenes simply running nasty stock footage, much of which is unlicensed from previous death films. Writer Damon Fox, who also narrates the film, figured out that death metal fans were the core audience watching the first *Traces* film and many of who were muting the audio and adding their own death metal soundtrack over the original feature's creepy keyboard score. Beginning with *Traces of Death II*, the films began to utilize death metal

record labels and artists (such as Meshuggah, Deceased, and Macabre) that perfectly complimented the stark and brutal on-screen mayhem. The series ran a total of five films and was first distributed on video by Dead Alive Productions who had released other shock-



In 1979 MGM Pictures released a film version of Jay Anson's book *The Amityville Horror*. The book was said to be a true account of the Lutz family's twenty-eight day stay in the home at 112 Ocean Avenue in Amityville, New York. What George and Kathy Lutz claim to have happened in that house is a topic that has been debated for years. However, on November 13th, 1974 Ronald DeFeo did murder his mother, father, two brothers and sister inside the home. Did demonic voices tell him to do it? I guess only DeFeo himself knows the answer to that question.

The house is a large Dutch Colonial built by Jesse Perdy in 1925 and still stands today. The biggest misconception about the movie is that people believe it was filmed in the actual house, however, this is not true. The actual home in Amityville has not appeared in

any of the films. The current owners of the home, as well as most of the people of Amityville, do not take too kindly to tourists. The owners got so fed up that they changed the famous eye-like windows to rectangle shaped ones and even went as far as changing the actual address. The home once known as 112 Ocean Avenue today is 108 Ocean Avenue.



The 1979 film, *The Amityville Horror* was filmed in Tom's River New Jersey which is a two hour drive from the real Amityville. The original film was shot mostly on-location at the house in Tom's River. The sequels, *Amityville II: The Possession* and *Amityville 3-D* were also shot in Tom's River but the interiors of the house were not used. The interiors were filmed on sets in Mexico.

The first location we will begin with is the intersection where the two priests crash the car after evil spirits make the car's hood pop up and obstruct their view of the road. This happens at the intersection of Hooper Avenue and Oak Avenue in the city of Tom's River.



James Brolin (George Lutz) crashes past the Town Hall in Tom's River.



Next we move on to when James Brolin's character, George Lutz, rides his motorcycle into town and goes to Town Hall to pick up some plans. This was filmed at Tom's River's actual Town Hall located at 33 Washington Street.



He then speeds off on his motorcycle to the library. If they did use the town's library in Tom's River he would have been heading in the right direction, however, he wouldn't have had to drive because it is right next door to the Town Hall.

I didn't have a chance to go inside the library because it was closed, but there is a very good chance it was the same one used in the film. I peeked through the window and it was under major construction so odds are it will not look the same today as it did in the film.

Our next location is the church which was used in both the first and second Amityville films. The church is St Peter's Roman Catholic Church located at 406 Forman Avenue, Point Pleasant Beach in New Jersey.

Next was by far the hardest location to find. This is where Father Bolen visits the now-blind Father Delaney. It is located on the campus of Georgian Court University located at 800 Lakewood Avenue in Lakewood, New Jersey. The area is known as the Sunken Garden and lagoon.



James Brolin finds his way to St Peter's Roman Catholic Church.



The hardest location to locate? The Sunken Garden and Lagoon.



Georgian Court University at 800 Lakewood Ave in Lakewood, New Jersey.

Next we visit the cemetery from *Amityville II: The Possession*. It is Riverside Cemetery located at 12 Market Street in Saddle Brook, New Jersey. This is where they have the funeral for Sorny's family in the film.

And finally, the bread and butter of this article; the house. Again, it always seems to confuse people that the house in the movie wasn't the real house. The house used in the first



More shots from The Sunken Garden and Lagoon.



The cemetery from Amityville II: The Possession's Riverside Cemetery.



Riverside Cemetery is located at 12 Market Street in Saddle Brook, NJ.

Did You Know? *Amityville II: The Possession* incorporates many sequences seen in *The Exorcist*, from a priest blessing the home to raised wounds on the main character's body asking for help.

three Amityville films is located at 18 Brooks Road in Tom's River, New Jersey. It is near the corner of Brooks Road and Dock Street where you see neighbors running towards the house in *Amityville II: The Possession*.



The winding roads leading to the infamous house!



The back of the Amityville home, showing where the bathhouse once stood

There have been many changes made to this location which can make things a bit confusing. I will try my best to clear all of this up for you. First off, the house has been moved one lot over. It used to be on the lot to the right (which is closest to the corner of Brooks Road and Dock Street). Currently there is another home there. Because of this it has caused major landscaping changes and the back yard area of the home looks nothing like it does in the film.

The main bathhouse from the film appears to be gone.

The neighbor's house directly across the street can be seen when Margot Kidder pulls in the driveway as James Brolin is chopping wood. It can also be seen when the two priests arrive in *Part II*.



A neighboring house as it was depicted in the film and as it appears today



The neighborhood surrounding the Amityville house.

Other neighboring homes can be seen in this scene from *Amityville II: The Possession*. You can see where the horse-shoe shaped driveway used to lead up to the left side of the movie house, but now leads up to the neighbor's house next door.

Not only was the house moved but it was also turned clockwise 90 degrees. The left side of the house used to face the street. Now the front of the house



Updates to the landscaping have definitely improved the location today.



The house front as it appeared in the film, and as it can be found today.

faces the street.

It appears that the garage has not moved much at all. It may have been moved over a bit, but it is still positioned as it was in the film.

You might be wondering why the house looks so different today. Well this was a pre-existing home that they built a facade on to recreate the look of the real house in Amityville, Long Island. A fake roof was built with three fake windows coming out of it above the front of the house. The iconic eye-like windows were also fakes built over pre-existing windows in the house. In 1985 Bob Randolph purchased all four eye-like windows as well as the construction plans and has had them ever since. Below is a picture of Bob with two of the windows.



Chopping wood, the garage outside the Amityville house as it appears today



Here is an old newspaper article showing the house under construction for the film.

In the film, whenever they would show the famous side of the house it would always be the right side of the house which faced the water. That is the side that has the balcony, unlike the left side that does not. It is hard to get a good photo of the right side of the house now because of the trees and a neighboring home.



It's easier to get pictures of the left side of the house that in the film faced the street!



More shots of the neighbor's house and how it looked today



At the very end of the film as the Lutz family are fleeing the house in their van George (James Brolin) stops in the middle of the street and runs back to save the family dog. In reality the direction they are heading is away from Dock Street on Brooks Avenue going towards a dead end rather than out which would have been the opposite direction. You can see the yellow DEAD END sign in the film which is still there today.

I wasn't going to bring up the 2005 remake, but I figured I better address it. While getting ready for the 2005 remake the film's producers did speak to the owners of the house in Tom's River about using it





Dead End "Thanks for visiting
Homer's Halloween House!"

but decided to do something different and build a facade onto an existing home with a more gothic design on a lake in Wisconsin. I hope this all has shed some light on the mysteries surrounding the Amityville house. Until next time, happy halloween!



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CHRIS RUSSELL



MASKA

"I love the smell of latex in the morning." To the average horror fan this statement may not hold much meaning (yet!). But just ask any mask collector and they will tell you there is simply nothing better than receiving that new "score," opening the box, and getting hit in the face with the intoxicating smell of latex. The love of all things "monster" and horror related art is what brought together artists and collectors from all over, converging to create the first-ever gathering of its kind dedicated to the artistry of masks.

The brain-child of mask maker/collector Eliot Brodsky (Rubberroom101.com), Mask-A-Palooza was held August 22-24th, 2008 at the Crowne Plaza in Cherry Hills, New Jersey (in conjunction with Monster-Mania). Browsing through the museum-like set-up seemed like a mask collector's heaven. From displays such as Rich "Dahone" Krusell's Big Poppe (Land of the Dead) and Andrew Santagato's Jordy Verml (Creepshow) to a variety of monsters for sale, Mask-A-Palooza contained something for every level of spectator and collector.

Chris Russell of Twisted Toybox had an impressive display of very reasonably priced original Halloween masks. Keeping in mind the average truck-or-leader, haunted attraction, and collector, Chris can fill just about any monster void. Renowned "Mask Doctor" Kelly Mann gained expertise while working at some of the biggest television and entertainment companies. "The Doc" created an exclusive mask especially for Mask-A-Palooza called the Ugly Roomer, one of which now resides with lucky raffle winner Rich Krusell. This mask is sure to become a favorite in the collecting world.

Sam McCain and his Horror Sanctum Studios creations were on hand to help christen the event. With a fairly recent return to the mask community, Sam has been winning over collectors with such pieces as his Pamela Voorhees head (F13 Part 2), a series of Myers masks, and a screen worthy Big Ben bust (House), all of which were available at the show. Sharing a table with HSS was George Liguori. George is responsible for saving dozens of Topstone mask molds from a date with the dumpster thus securing many of these classics for today's collectors.

Illustrator Daniel Home was present, with his wonderful illustrations, resin kits, and his new line of Monster Show latex masks. Daniel was busy all weekend working on his next Monster Show mask based on the Karloff Brode of Frankenstein. Eric and Ann Austin of The Halloween Mask Association (TheHMA.net) brought along some great masks by Bump in the Night, Distortions, and Fearscape Studios. Compleat Sculptor was also on hand with a full range of sculpting, molding, and casting supplies for all aspiring artists.

SPFX Masks is their name and silicone is their game. Founder Rusty Slusser introduced a new breed of monster masks to the scene (in 2001) with his silicone creations that actually conform to the wearer's face. This was my first opportunity to have a close look at their product and I thought they were fantastic... these really need to be seen (and felt!) in person to get the full appreciation.

Also on the roster was Justin Mabry of Night Owl Productions, whose quality of work has propelled him to the top of his class. Widely known for his "masked" characters, Justin has created some of the hobby's most sought after masks of this genre. A newly unveiled Shock Monster



Eric Austin's TheHMA.net display.

SPFX silicone mask display with George Liguori's Shock Monster products.

Mask-APalooza

By Jason "Chainsaw" Shaw and Jack Marcus

appeared as the centerpiece of the Green Ghoul's table, surrounded by newcomers Nail Mouth, his Bernie Wington monster, and a bust of Frankenstein based on the Aurora model kits of the 1960s and 1970s.

Making the trek from Hollywoodland were two very experienced and talented SPFX artists. The self-proclaimed "newbie to this community," Bruce Spaulding Fuller, made a very impressive entry with the likes of his Retro Halloween set and Midnight mask. Having worked on such films as Terminator 2, Army of Darkness, and Underworld, Bruce will surely be one to keep an eye on. Already known to the mask world, Jordy Schell of Schell Sculpture Studio wowed the crowd with his stylish and realistic creatures. Having his hand in such projects as Edward Scissorhands, A.I.P.R., and Cloverfield, Jordy produced what would be my personal favorite piece of the convention... his Werewolf.

For the collector with even deeper pockets, artist Thomas Kuebler's display of life-sized characters garnered much deserved attention. Although his stunningly realistic creations are far out of reach for this collector, the sheer artistry and jaw dropping detail of Thomas's original silicone designs (such as "Zombie Gunslinger" and a "High Society Grande Dame" that resembled a cross between a bird and an art eater!) can be appreciated by artists and collectors alike.

Mask-A-Palooza's featured collector, Bill Luciani, was on board with his massive "One Hundred Heads of Frankenstein" exhibit. His eye-popping collection had every memorable Frankenstein head either cast in wax or rubber. He had Universal Franksteins, Hammer Franksteins, and Toho Franksteins! Frankenstein covered in quicksand, with bandages, without bandages, with burns, without burns... AMAZING! As an added attraction, Luciani brought in some of his impressive full-sized monsters; most imposing was an 8 foot tall wax recreation of Glenn Strange created by the talented Tony Pliocco and Alvarez Wax Studios.

And what mask convention would be complete without a visit from two of the top names in the mask industry? Special guests Don Post Jr. (Don Post Studios) and Ed Edmunds (Distortions Unlimited), along with Bill Ystrom (Be Something/Zagone Studios), were in attendance, lending their experience and knowledge to the "Masks - History in the Making" seminar... a true delight for fans of the mass-produced world. Collector "BIG CAT" brought in some fine examples of Don Post Studios and Distortions masks for all to see. Some of those pieces were original castings from the 1960s and early 1970s in mint condition!

As a final curtain to this first time event, artists and collectors alike were treated to a sculpting demonstration by Jordy Schell. In the space of an hour and a half, Jordy transformed a block of clay into a gilled creature, all the while engaging the crowd with "tales from the mask-side."

In my opinion the weekend was a great success with over 700 headhunters and lurkers making their way through the doors. For some attendees the flash of their camera was enough to capture the memories of this momentous weekend, while others returned home with empty wallets and a shelf full of rubber heads. The one thing that connects us all together... our love of all things monster. Keep an eye out for Monstergokozza, coming in 2009.

Special Thanks to Justin Mabry



BRUCE SPAULDING FULLER



JORDY SCHELL



THOMAS KUEBLER



DISCLAIMER

HorrorHound does not seek to glorify the actions of serial killers or mass murders over the course of these articles. Our only interest is in providing some insight into the public intrigue surrounding the actions of these individuals. Our goal is to provide a history of films based on serial killers as well as the influence they have had on cinema in general. Since the year 2000, several biographic style films have been released in mass numbers and frequency based on some of the most heavily publicized serial killer cases in the United States. Some of these films leave little to the imagination while others just begin to scratch the gritty surface of these morbid true tales.

Hollywood has borrowed many key elements from these real life monsters and the murders they have committed, moving horror away from its science fiction roots and into the realm of reality. Films like *Psycho* (based on serial killer, Ed Gein) ushered in a new style of horror film. HorrorHound now needed to believe that what was happening up on the screen could really happen to them outside the theater. The evolution was inevitable with current events and an ever changing complex world. You might find yourself conflicted asking, "Am I sick for watching serial killer films?" The first television broadcast film to introduce the public to a true serial killer murder case was based on the Manson murders titled *Helter Skelter*. When *Helter Skelter* aired as a two part television mini-series, in April of 1976 on CBS, it averaged 36.4 ratings/54 share over two nights and as the highest rated two-part made-for-TV movie ever. America's morbid fascination and curiosity was well documented on those two nights. Serial killer movies can work on many levels, some as a courtroom dramas, others as crime documentaries, and mostly as creepy horror films. Let's now look at our next article to cover these maniacs and the films about and inspired by them.

LIZZIE BORDEN by Katelyn Nelson

Lizzie Borden never received a catchy nickname like many of the murderers who came along in the century after her alleged crime was committed; however, she was the recipient of a morbid nursery rhyme:

Lizzie Borden took an axe
and gave her mother forty whacks,
when she saw what she had done,
she gave her father forty-one.

Although the jingle is not quite accurate, it makes reference to the infamous double-homicide which took place at the Borden household in Fall River, Massachusetts on the morning of August 4th, 1892. On the aforementioned day, the bodies of Lizzie's father (Andrew Jackson Borden) and stepmother (Abby Duffee Borden) were found, both bludgeoned eleven and nineteen times, respectively, by a hatchet. Being the primary suspect, Lizzie Borden was tried for the murders, but was acquitted by a jury after a very brief deliberation. In fact, speculation on whether or not Lizzie Borden did indeed kill her parents still exists to this day.

Very little is known about Lizzie Borden's life leading up to that fateful summer day in 1892. She was born on July 19th, 1860, and her biological mother Sarah died before Lizzie even turned three years old. It was only a couple years after her mother's death that her father re-married, so Lizzie spent most of her formative years knowing Abby as her stepmother. However, by all accounts, Lizzie never called Abby her stepmother, but instead referred to her as Mrs. Borden. Lizzie also had a sister, Emma, eight years her senior. Lizzie's father Andrew was rather wealthy and owned quite a bit of property. Many theorists hypothesize that his eventual murder could have had something to do with ownership of this property. Andrew reportedly began to re-allocate some of his property to his second wife's family, a deed that infuriated his two daughters and supposedly caused a rift in the household. In fact, Lizzie was really so upset as to resort to an act of homicide?

Not long before noon on August 4th, 1892, Lizzie Borden discovered the dead body of her father Andrew slumped over on the living room sofa. He had been hacked in the head multiple times with what appeared to be either a hatchet or an axe, crushing his skull and even slicing his left eyeball cleanly in half. Lizzie called out to the Borden family's maid, Bridget Sullivan, to tell of her discovery. The maid had been resting on the third floor of the house in her bedroom at this time.

Neighbors quickly rushed to the household to tend to Lizzie, though by all accounts she appeared very cold and collected given the events that were transpiring. Neighbors began to inquire as to the whereabouts of Lizzie's stepmother. It was at this time that the maid ventured upstairs to find Abby lying lifeless on the floor of the guest bedroom, in a similarly bludgeoned and bloody state as her now-deceased spouse.

Soon thereafter, the police arrived and began to investigate the double homicide. Only Lizzie and the maid Bridget were on the Borden's property at the time of the murders. Lizzie's sister Emma had been away from home for some time visiting friends during the time of the killings. Lizzie's Uncle John had been at the residence earlier in the day, but had not returned after leaving for town in the morning to run some errands with Mr. Borden. Authorities questioned Lizzie, who claimed to have been out in the layoff of the family barn looking for fishing snakes at the time the acts of homicide were committed. No evidence could be found to



actually show that Lizzie was indeed in the barn at this time in what appeared to be a strange destination on such a hot summer day. In addition, Lizzie could not explain why she had not heard nor seen anything incriminating during the time the crimes were committed, leading to further speculation on her involvement. Despite the inconsistencies in her story, Lizzie did not appear to bear any marks or bloodstains on her at the time of questioning.

Investigators discovered a hatchet with the handle mostly broken off in the basement of the Borden household, suspecting it to be the murder weapon despite no traces of blood being found on it. It was also determined that Lizzie's stepmother Abby had been killed about an hour before her husband met his fate. In addition, authorities discovered that Mr. Borden did not have a formal will in place at the time of his demise, therefore, his fortune (estimated as high as several hundred thousand dollars) would be left to his two daughters since his wife had also passed on. With the evidence at hand, police arrested Lizzie Borden on August 11th, 1892 and charged her with the murder of her parents.

Lizzie's trial did not begin until June of the following year. During this time leading to the trial, additional evidence had surfaced. Only a few days after the murders, Lizzie had burned a silk dress in the kitchen stove, citing a stain on it as the reason. She later gave the authorities the dress she supposedly wore the day of the crime, however, her motives for burning the fancy silk dress remained suspect. Reportedly, Lizzie also attempted to purchase poison just one day prior to the double murder. Although all of the information gathered pointed to Lizzie Borden's guilt, the evidence was strictly circumstantial.

During her trial, Lizzie did not testify. She had previously given a testimony to police following the murders, however, this testimony was not admitted as evidence since it took place before Lizzie was officially charged with the crimes. Factoring in all of the circumstantial evidence, a crew of very expensive lawyers, and no clear-cut motive, Lizzie Borden was found not guilty of murder by a jury on June 20th, 1893. Although the townsfolk were split on their opinion of Lizzie's guilt, she remained in her hometown of Fall River until her death in 1927. Ironically, she was buried next to the father and stepmother she supposedly hacked to bits. Whether or not she actually committed the atrocities she was accused of, the legend of Lizzie Borden lives on to this day. Horror cinema has even had its share of her influence.

LIZZIE IN RECENT FILMS

As with any major crime in American history, Hollywood has no doubt delved into the proverbial Lizzie Borden well to find inspiration for home entertainment and cinematic outings. Guilty or not, the legend of these crimes has created a "serial killer" icon regardless, one of the few that hails over a female-criminal character. On television the story of Lizzie Borden has been retold via an Alfred Hitchcock Presents episode entitled "The Older Sister" in which Emma was found to be the real murderer with Lizzie covering-up the crime to protect her. A dramatization of the story was told on *Armstrong Circle Theatre* in 1961. In 1975, a made-for-TV movie was released entitled *The Legend of Lizzie Borden*. More recently a number of TV channels and shows have spotlighted the crime, including the Discovery Channel, the History Channel and *So-Pr-It's-Ghost-Hunters*, in which the supernatural hunting crew investigates the old Borden residence for spirits. An opera simply titled *Lizzie Borden* was even produced in 1996. Lizzie (as a character) appeared in 1973's *Terror in the Wax Museum*, 1988's *Saturday the 14th Shivers Back*, in 2001's *Monkneybone*, and 2006's *The Old World*. Direct-to-video features released in 2006 and 2008 played up Lizzie Borden's history, dubbed *The Curse of Lizzie Borden* (and the sequel tag-lined "Prom Night").





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HORRORHOUND WEEKEND

Another HorrorHound Weekend in the books (our fifth to date!) with what we consider our best line-up thus far. Guests this time around included Joe Dante, Dick Miller, Belinda Baleski, and Zech Gulligan for a Gremlins reunion. Dee Wallace, Jeffrey Combs, and Jake Busey (from The Frighteners) were all on hand, as were Doug Jones (Hellboy), Andrew Divo (Halloween 4), Michael Biehn (Terminator), Danielle Harris (Halloween 4), Derek Mears, Tom Savini, John Amos, Kane Hodder, and so many more!

David Meier



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Andrew Divo (Halloween 4) - what's your wish?



High enjoys character actor Gremlins reunion with Belinda Baleski, Zech Gulligan, Joe Dante, and Carl Lumbly.



Michael Biehn



Our Frighteners cast reunion of Jeffrey Combs, Jake Busey, and Dee Wallace



The wonderful Doug Jones



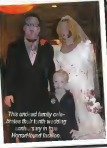
Tom Savini, a mysterious Zombie-Nation, and John Amos (Greenshoe)



Kane Hodder in his iconic mask



Frighteners & Michael Biehn



This ancient family celebration that's been waiting for us in the HorrorHound to come



Tom Savini posing in his iconic mask

HorrorHound's own Jeff Rubin





GREMLINS



HORRORHOUND LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD!

This August 31st, at the HorrorHound Weekend event in Indianapolis, Indiana, we were honored to present guest Dick Miller, with our first-ever HorrorHound Lifetime Achievement Award. Sculpted by Jeff Reibner, bronzed, and in the shape of our lovable magazine mascot, the statuette is the first in a hopeful long history of such presentations, delivered to only the most important names within this industry we love and respect so much.

For the first Lifetime Achievement Award we were lucky enough to present the trophy in person. The beneficiary? Often overlooked and under-credited; he may not be a marquee name, but anyone who has seen him on film no doubt recognizes him, as he radiates from the screen. He demands your attention and steals every scene he appears in. From working classic B-grade Roger Corman films such as *A Bucket of Blood*, *Hollywood Boulevard*, and *X: The Man with X-Ray Eyes* to becoming Joe Dante's "good luck charm," appearing in such hits as *The Howling*, *Gremlins* and *Twilight Zone: The Movie*. He has been involved with over one hundred films over his career, worked with some of the biggest name actors in the industry (Boris Karloff, Jack Nicholson, Arnold

Schwarzenegger), not to mention the biggest name directors (James Cameron, Steven Spielberg and the aforementioned Dante). The actor of which we so respectfully speak is Dick Miller.

Back in 2005 we at HorrorHound, just prior to going to press with our premiere issue, had planned on printing an edging Hall of Fame, wherein each issue we would induct a key name from this industry. Days away from press time, the staff opted instead to focus on the films themselves, which resulted in our regular Hall of Fame feature seen on page 63 of this very issue. For this proposed first issue Hall of

Fame, we had planned on presenting Dick Miller as the inaugural inductee. For the past three years we have hoped to be given a chance to play on this initial idea, and with Dick Miller's acceptance of appearing at our Indianapolis event, it presented the best possible opportunity to rectify our mistake by not having Mr. Miller present in our first issue. Thank you Mr. Miller for attending our Indianapolis event, meeting with all of your fans, for being able to personally accept your award, and for giving us countless decades of cinematic enjoyment.



Did You Know? IMDb.com lists Dick Miller as having appeared in a total of 168 movie and television roles!

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FANTASM

This issue's Collector Spotlight comes from Haley Dennis. She has been an avid horror fan since she was a little kid. "I love your magazine and was hoping I could get my collection into your Fantasm section." Haley e-mailed "I've been collecting horror movies and memorabilia for years. My collection is a mix of things I bought and made myself. There are two paintings I did and a corpse I made as well as some masks my boyfriend and I are sculpting." Haley hopes to get into independent filmmaking and special effects business. Thanks Haley for sharing pics of your "Crypt" with us - and keep sending in those collection photos HorrorHounds!



HorrorHound Collector's Spotlight: Haley Dennis



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HORRORHOUND

HALL OF FAME

THE BLAIR WITCH PROJECT

by Eric Newell

Following in the paw prints of such amazing cinematic masterpieces as *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, *The Howling*, *American Psycho*, *Straw Dogs*, *The Last Boy*, *The Thing*, and *The Wolf Man* - the *HorrorHound Hall of Fame* now adds the hand-held horror classic *The Blair Witch Project* to its ranks!

I was seventeen when *The Blair Witch Project* stormed into multiplexes. I can recall sitting outside of my local movie theater with a group of my friends, feverish with excitement over witnessing the pop culture phenomenon that everyone seemed to be talking about. The fact that my friends were there at all was a miracle, since it was hard enough to get the lazy slackers out to any movie, let alone a horror film. As we walked into the packed theater, I realized for the first time that this film had truly penetrated the radar of the fickle, general movie-going public.

Ever since it had become the first picture to be picked up at the 1998 Sundance Film Festival, the internet had been abuzz with rumors of the "true story" of *The Blair Witch Project*. According to the trailers, the film was about a group of college students who had gone missing in the woods just outside Burkittsville, Maryland, and consisted of the "found footage" they had supposedly shot while lost in the woods. Most of the \$25 million marketing budget had been spent on the internet campaign, becoming the first film to truly utilize the medium. It's fitting then that my friends and I - in many ways the first generation to grow up with the internet in our households - still hold the film up as one of the seminal movie-going experiences of our young lives.

We left the theater that night with a mixture of feelings. Aside from the obligatory fake butternut/bacon buzz, there was a bit of uneasiness in the air. We had all been genuinely freaked out by the experience (except for the inevitable lone dissenter), and were none too eager to get headed back to our quiet suburban homes. I can recall driving home with my friend John that night, and nearly having a coronary at the sight of a family of opossums darting into the road in front of our car. It certainly wasn't one of our proudest moments.

The initial viral marketing campaign had worked so well that many people were convinced that the events depicted in the film were real, and the rumors persisted long after Arisan had begun trucking out the stars in front of television audiences to assure the public that they were in fact still alive. When the real nuts and bolts of the production finally began to surface, they told a story that was infinitely more ingenious than it actually had been true. The three lead actors, Michael C. Williams, Joshua Leonard, and Heather Donohue were picked from a group of over 2,000 people who had shown up for the initial audition. Directors Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sanchez, who at the time were college students, had put out a call for actors who were skilled with improv.

The interviews seen in the beginning of the film are a combination of actors and

actual townspeople, many of whom claimed prior knowledge of the legend of the Blair Witch. One often referenced scene involves a mother holding her young son. While discussing her supposed recollections of the legend, her baby begins to cry and tries to shut her mouth with his hand. This was just one in a long list of genuine responses the crew garnered while interviewing residents of the town they shot in, a fact that adds to the surrealism that's heavy throughout film.

Once the initial shots were finished, the three actors were sent into the woods with camera equipment, backpacks full of batteries, and a GPS tracker. Every morning when they woke up, they were charged with hiking to specific locales using coordinates supplied to them by the crew. Once they arrived, they would find a milk crate with three plastic 35mm film canisters, each with one of the actors' names written on it. Inside were directions for the day. They included where to go, what arguments to start, and a general direction for their characters.

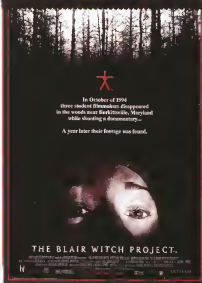
They then spent the entire day improvising dialog. Come nightfall, the filmmakers used their GPS beacon to track the actors down and harass them with frightening sounds. This unorthodox method paid off by producing genuinely frightened responses from the film's protagonists. It's hard to believe that a film with so many iconic moments could have been made in such a vacuum. When pointed in this light, scenes, such as Heather Donohue's legendary on-camera apology to her friends and family take on a heightened significance.

As with most things in life, *The Blair Witch Project* was not without its critics. Die-hard cinephiles cited films such as *Cannibal Holocaust* and *Man Bites Dog* as proof that the picture was not breaking any new ground with its first-person aesthetics. Amongst mainstream fans, there were plenty of people who had nothing scary within the experience, and even more who reported feeling nauseous from the intentionally shaky camera work.

For those who did connect with it however, including my friends and I on that fateful Friday night, the film has become the stuff of nightmares. To those who have embraced it, *The Blair Witch Project* is truly a celebration of the viewer's imagination. By not showing us the film's antagonist (a move surely dictated by budgetary constraints as much as creative inspiration), the filmmakers force you to create the

image yourself! Therefore, the beast ends up becoming whatever scares you the most.

It is perhaps fitting then that with its \$248 million worldwide box office total, *The Blair Witch Project* went on to supplant John Carpenter's *Halloween* as the highest grossing independent horror film of all time. Much like Michael Myers and his pale, lifeless mask, *The Blair Witch* is a blank canvas, meant for you to paint on it whatever you like... or more appropriately, whatever you fear. It seems that at the end of the day, the films that allow you that freedom will always be scarier than the ones that insist on telling you what is scary. And that is why, dear *HorrorHounds*, we have chosen to induct *The Blair Witch Project* into our Hall of Fame. 🐾



NEXT ISSUE HORROR Convention Calendar

How on Earth can we finish up the year, following some of our most exciting issues to date? We covered Halloween, *The Exorcist*, *Pumpkinhead*, and *Chel's Play*... but next issue no doubt stands to deliver as we focus our regular-series retrospective spotlight on one of the zaniest horror/sci-fi films to ever penetrate the big screen... of course, we are talking about *The Chiodo Brothers' original... Killer Klowns from Outer Space!* Celebrating twenty years of hijinks, we take a look back at the clowns, the popcorn, cotton-candy, and killer shadow puppets, and discuss it all with the men behind one of the most impressive FX-riddled films of our generation. Plus merchandise, memorabilia, toys - whatever you call it - we'll have it!

Friday the 13th is ever-so-close to re-invading our cinemas and *HorrorHound* can't wait! After two issue's worth of Derek Mears goodies, we have a special look at the man they call Jason - as well as the machete, the nixon, the grave, and (most importantly) the mask. It is all in celebration to the return of "mommy's little boy" this February 13th, 2009!

The Video Invasion continues next issue as we take a look at yet another key distribution company of the '80s. First there was Vestron, then Wizard and Gorgon... next issue Matt Moore takes on the history of Thriller Video!

Now that the haunting season has passed, we decide to take a look at one of the key Halloween mask companies of the past ten years. They have given us some of the most memorable modern-licensed masks in the form of *House of 1000 Corpses*, *Fu's Zombie*, *Shockwaves*, and *Killer Klowns from Outer Space*. We are talking about *Bump in the Night Productions*!

On top of this, we have a few big toy reveals on the way from such companies as Amek Time Toys and Sideshow Collectibles as the *October Toy Fair* event has unveiled new horror goodies. We take a look at the new *It* TV series *Fringe* as well as an exciting comic book article we have been working on for the past three years!! All this and more in *HorrorHound* #15, in stores this December!

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Rock & Roll Sci-Fi/Horror Fest
 November 1st, 2008
 New York, NY
 Holiday Inn, 440 W. 57th
(Featuring stars from Friday the 13th Part 2, and many more)

Crypticon Minneapolis
 November 14 thru 16th, 2008
 Roseville, MN
 The Radisson

New York Comic-Con
 February 6 thru 8th, 2009
 New York, NY
 The Javits Center

Texas Fear Fest
 November 7 thru 9th, 2009
 Arlington, TX
 Arlington Convention Center
(Featuring guests from Monster Squad and Friday the 13th Part VI)

Monster Mania
 March 13 thru 15th, 2009
 Cherry Hill, NJ
 Crowne Plaza Hotel
(Featuring Tobe Hooper, Fairuz Balk, and more!)

HorrorHound Weekend Indy
 March 27 thru 29th, 2009
 Indianapolis, IN
 Indianapolis Marriott East
(Featuring Corey Haim, Derek Mears, and more!)

Cinema Wasteland
 April 3 thru 5th, 2009
 Strongsville, OH
 Holiday Inn Select
(Featuring a Texas Chainsaw Massacre reunion!)

FX International
 April 17 thru 19th, 2009
 Orlando, FL
 Orange County Convention Center
(Guests TBA)

Texas Frightmare Weekend
 May 1 thru 3rd, 2009
 Dallas, TX
 Sheraton Grand
(Featuring Bruce Campbell, William Forsythe, and more!)

Wonderfest
20th Anniversary Show!
 May 16 thru 17th, 2009
 Louisville, KY
 The Crowne Plaza
(Guests TBA)

HorrorHound Weekend Detroit
 June (date rescheduled from Oct)
 Ypsilanti, MI
 Ann Arbor Marriott

Monster Mania; Hartford
 June 12 thru 14th, 2009
 Hartford, CT
 Crowne Plaza Cromwell
(Featuring Robert Englund!)

**see next issue for more show listings*

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